PORTABLE

Vancouver

2nd Edition

by Shawn Blore

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

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About the Author

A native of California and resident by turns of Ottawa, Amsterdam, Moscow, and (for nearly the past decade) Vancouver, **Shawn Blore** is a newspaper journalist, award-winning magazine writer, and author of the best-selling *Vancouver: Secrets of the City*. He is also a coauthor of *Frommer's Canada, Frommer's Brazil,* and *Frommer's Portable Rio de Janeiro.*

An Invitation to the Reader

In researching this book, we discovered many wonderful places—hotels, restaurants, shops, and more. We're sure you'll find others. Please tell us about them, so we can share the information with your fellow travelers in upcoming editions. If you were disappointed with a recommendation, we'd love to know that, too. Please write to:

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An Additional Note

Please be advised that travel information is subject to change at any time—and this is especially true of prices. We therefore suggest that you write or call ahead for confirmation when making your travel plans. The authors, editors, and publisher cannot be held responsible for the experiences of readers while traveling. Your safety is important to us, however, so we encourage you to stay alert and be aware of your surroundings. Keep a close eye on cameras, purses, and wallets, all favorite targets of thieves and pickpockets.

What the Symbols Mean

The following abbreviations are used for credit cards:

AE American Express	DISC Discover	V Visa
DC Diners Club	MC MasterCard	

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Now that you have the guidebook to a great trip, visit our website at **www.frommers.com** for travel information on nearly 2,500 destinations. With features updated regularly, we give you instant access to the most current trip-planning information available. At Frommers.com, you'll also find the best prices on airfares, accommodations, and car rentals—and you can even book travel online through our travel booking partners. At Frommers.com, you'll also find the following:

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1

Planning Your Trip to Vancouver

Whether you're visiting Vancouver for business or shopping, dining or dancing, beach walking or backwoods trekking, or all of the above, here are some tips to help you plan your trip.

1 Visitor Information & Entry Requirements

VISITOR INFORMATION

You can get Canadian tourism information at consulate offices in most major American cities. The provincial and municipal Canadian tourism boards are also great sources of travel information. Contact **Super Natural British Columbia-Tourism B.C.,** Box 9830 Stn. Prov. Government, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9W5 (✆ **800/HELLO-BC** or 604/435-5622; www.hellobc.com; www.snbc-res.com for accommodation reservations), for information about travel and accommodations throughout the province.

Tourism Vancouver's Tourist Info Centre, 200 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6C 3L6 (✆ **604/683-2000;** www.tourismvancouver.com), can help you with everything from booking accommodations to making suggestions for what to see and do.

For cultural information, check out the website for *Vancouver Magazine* at **www.vanmag.com**.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

If you're driving from Seattle, you'll need to clear Customs at the Peace Arch crossing (open 24 hr.) in Blaine, Washington. You'll pass through **Canadian Customs** (✆ **800/461-9999** or 204/983-3500) to enter Canada, and **U.S. Customs** (✆ **360/332-5771**) on your departure. Duty-free shops are located in Blaine at the last exit before the border going into Canada. On the Canadian side, the shops are a little more difficult to find. They're on the right, just after the speed limit drops to 35 kilometers per hour (22 mph).

If you fly directly into Vancouver International Airport from another country, you'll go through Customs in the new International

Terminal. Once you clear passport control, you and your luggage will go through Customs before you leave the terminal. (Even if you don't have anything to declare, Customs officials randomly select a few passengers and search their luggage.)

DOCUMENTS FOR U.S. CITIZENS

Citizens or permanent U.S. residents don't require visas to enter Canada. American citizens need to show proof of citizenship and residence; a passport or birth certificate plus a driver's license is sufficient. Naturalized citizens should carry their naturalization certificates. However, with increased border security, it's best to err on the side of caution and bring your passport.

Permanent U.S. residents who are not U.S. citizens should carry their passports and Resident Alien Card (U.S. form I-151 or I-551). Foreign students and other noncitizen U.S. residents should carry their passports or a Temporary Resident Card (form 1688) or Employment Authorization Card (1688A or 1688B), a visitor's visa; I-94 Arrival-Departure Record, a current I-20 copy of IAP-66 indicating student status, proof of sufficient funds for a temporary stay, and evidence of return transportation. In either case, citizens of other countries traveling to Canada from the United States should check with the Canadian Consulate before departure to see if a visitor's visa is required.

If you're bringing children into Canada, you must have proof of legal guardianship. Lack of it can cause long delays at the border, because there have been cases of parents involved in custody cases abducting their children and attempting to flee to Canada (despite the fact that the Canadian and U.S. governments cooperate closely to resolve matters of this sort). If you're under 18 and not accompanied by a parent or guardian, you should bring a permission letter signed by your parent or legal guardian allowing you to travel to Canada.

DOCUMENTS FOR COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS

Citizens of Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand don't require visas to enter Canada, but they do need to show proof of commonwealth citizenship (such as a passport), as well as evidence of funds sufficient for a temporary stay (credit cards work well here). Naturalized citizens should carry their naturalization certificates. Permanent residents of commonwealth nations should carry their passports and resident status cards. Foreign students and other residents should carry their passports or temporary resident cards or employment authorization cards, a visitor's visa, arrival-departure record, a current copy of student status, proof of sufficient funds for

a temporary stay, and evidence of return transportation. Check with the Canadian Consulate before departure to see if you will also need a visitor's visa.

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

Your personal baggage can include the following: boats, motors, snowmobiles, camping and sports equipment, appliances, TV sets, musical instruments, personal computers, cameras, and other items of a personal or household nature. If you are bringing excess luggage, be sure to carry a detailed inventory list that includes the acquisition date, serial number, and cost or replacement value of each item. It sounds tedious, but it can speed things up at the border. Customs will help you fill in the forms that allow you to temporarily bring in your effects. This list will also be used by U.S. Customs to check off what you bring out. You will be charged Customs duties for anything left in Canada.

If you're over 18, you're allowed to bring in 40 ounces of liquor and wine or 24 12-ounce cans or bottles of beer and ale, and 50 cigars, 400 cigarettes, or 14 ounces of manufactured tobacco per person. Any excess is subject to duty. Gifts not exceeding C$60 (US$39) and not containing tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or advertising material can be brought in duty-free. Meats, plants, and vegetables are subject to inspection on entry. There are restrictions, so contact the Canadian Consulate for more details if you want to bring produce into the country.

For more information concerning items you wish to bring in and out of the country, contact the **Canadian Customs Office** (✆ **800/461-9999** or 204/983-3500).

2 Money

CURRENCY

The Canadian currency system is decimal and resembles both British and U.S. denominations. Canadian monetary units are dollars and cents, with dollars coming in different colors, just like British currency. The standard denominations are C$5 (US$3.20), C$10 (US$6.50), C$20 (US$13), C$50 (US$33), and C$100 (US$65). The "loonie" (so named because of the loon on one side) is the C$1 (US65¢) coin that replaced the C$1 bill. A C$2 (US$1.30) coin, called the "toonie" because it's worth two loonies, has replaced the C$2 bill.

Banks and other financial institutions offer a standard rate of exchange based on the daily world monetary rate. Avoid C$100 bills

when exchanging money, as many stores refuse to accept these bills. The best exchange rates can be had by withdrawing funds from bank ATMs. Hotels will also gladly exchange your notes, but they usually give a slightly lower exchange rate. Almost all stores and restaurants accept American currency, and most will exchange amounts in excess of your dinner check or purchase. However, these establishments are allowed to set their own exchange percentages and generally offer the worst rates of all.

The exchange rate between Canadian and U.S. dollars should always be kept in mind. The figures charged in hotels and restaurants in Vancouver are often incrementally higher than in comparable U.S. cities; the cost is typically about one-third less. Canada, at the moment, is a bargain.

TRAVELER'S CHECKS

Traveler's checks in Canadian funds are the safest way to carry money and are universally accepted by banks (which may charge a small fee to cash them), larger stores, and hotels. If you are carrying American Express (✆ **604/669-2813**) or Thomas Cook (✆ **604/641-1229**) traveler's checks, you can cash them at the local offices of those companies free of charge.

ATM NETWORKS

The 24-hour PLUS and Cirrus ATM systems are widely available in Vancouver. The systems convert Canadian withdrawals to your account's currency within 24 hours, so don't panic if you call your bank and hear a one-to-one balance immediately after conducting a transaction. Cirrus network cards work at ATMs at the **Bank of Montreal** (✆ **604/665-2703**), **CIBC** (✆ **800/465-2422**), **Hong Kong Bank of Canada** (✆ **604/641-1830**), **Royal Bank** (✆ **800/769-2511**), and **Toronto Dominion** (✆ **866/567-8888**), and at all other ATMs that display the Cirrus logo. None of these ATM systems provides your current balance. You must know your four-digit PIN to access Canadian ATMs.

CREDIT & DEBIT CARDS

Major U.S. credit cards are widely accepted in British Columbia, especially American Express, MasterCard, and Visa. British debit cards like Barclay's Visa debit card are also accepted. Diners Club, Carte Blanche, Discover, JCB, and EnRoute are taken by some establishments, but not as many. The amount spent in Canadian dollars will automatically be converted by your issuing company to

your currency when you're billed—generally at rates that are better than you'd receive for cash at a currency exchange.

3 When to Go

CLIMATE

Tree experts say that a rainforest species like the Western Red Cedar needs at least 30 inches of precipitation a year. Vancouver gets about 46 inches a year, a cause for no small celebration among the local cedar population. Homo sapiens simply learn to adjust.

For example, most of that precipitation arrives in the wintertime, when, with a 30-minute drive to the mountains, you can trade the rain for snow. Skiing and snowboarding are popular and are practiced from mid-December until the mountain snowpack melts away in June. Except in Whistler, hotels in the winter are quiet and the restaurants are uncluttered. This is also the time when Vancouver's cultural scene is at its most active.

Around mid-February, the winds begin to slacken, the sun shines a bit more, and the blossoms on the cherry trees begin to poke their heads out, timid at first, but gaining more confidence with each day until, by the beginning of March, there's a riot of pink on every street. The sun comes out, and stays out. From then until the rains close in again in mid-October is prime visiting time for sun junkies. Of course, that's also when most other visitors arrive.

WEATHER

Vancouver enjoys moderately warm, sunny summers and mild, rainy winters. There are 16 hours of daylight in mid-June, which means more hours at the beach, shopping, or in the mountains than in other parts of North America. Only 10% of the annual rainfall occurs during the summer months. The average annual rainfall in Vancouver is 46 inches.

Daily Mean Temperature & Total Precipitation for Vancouver, B.C.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Temp (°F)	38.0	41.2	44.6	39.6	46.2	62.4	66.4	66.6	60.6	42.0	48.0	39.0
Temp (°C)	3.3	5.1	7.0	4.2	7.8	16.9	19.1	19.2	15.8	5.6	8.9	3.9
Prec. (in.)	5.9	4.9	4.3	3.0	2.4	1.8	1.4	1.5	2.5	4.5	6.7	7.0

HOLIDAYS

The official British Columbian public holidays are as follows: New Year's Day (Jan 1); Good Friday, Easter, Easter Monday (Apr 18-21, 2003); Victoria Day (May 19, 2003); Canada Day (July 1); B.C.

Day (Aug 4, 2003); Labour Day (Sept 1, 2003); Thanksgiving (Oct 13, 2003); Remembrance Day (Nov 11); Christmas (Dec 25); and Boxing Day (Dec 26).

VANCOUVER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Festivals held in Vancouver draw millions of visitors each year. Things may seem a little quiet in the winter and early spring, but that's because most residents simply head for the ski slopes. Resorts such as **Whistler** and **Blackcomb** (✆ **604/932-2394**) have events happening nearly every weekend. If no contact number or location is given for any of the events listed below, **Tourism Vancouver** (✆ **604/683-2000**) should be able to provide further details.

January

Polar Bear Swim, English Bay Beach. Thousands of hardy citizens show up in elaborate costumes to take a dip in the icy waters of English Bay. January 1.

Annual Bald Eagle Count, Brackendale. Bald eagles gather en masse every winter near Brackendale to feed on salmon. In January 1994, volunteers counted a world-record 3,700 eagles. The count starts at the **Brackendale Art Gallery** (✆ **604/898-3333**). First Sunday in January. Meet at 9am at the Art Gallery for a guided tour.

February

Chinese New Year, Chinatown. This is when the Chinese traditionally pay their debts and forgive old grievances to start the new lunar year with a clean slate. These Chinese communities launch a 2-week celebration, ringing in the new year with firecrackers, dancing dragon parades, and other festivities. Late January or early February (Feb 1 in 2003).

March

Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival (www.playhousewinefest.com). This is a major wine-tasting event featuring the latest international vintages. Each winery sets up a booth where you may try as many varieties as you like. Cheese and paté are laid out on strategically placed tables. Late March or early April (Mar 24-30 in 2003).

April

Baisakhi Day Parade. The Sikh Indian New Year is celebrated with a colorful parade around Ross Street near Marine Drive and ends with a vegetarian feast at the temple. Contact **Khalsa Diwan Gurudwara Temple** (✆ **604/324-2010**) for more information. Mid-April.

Vancouver Sun Run. This is Canada's biggest 10K race, featuring over 40,000 runners, joggers, and walkers who race through 10 scenic kilometers (6.2 miles). The run downtown and finishes at B.C. Place Stadium. Call ✆ **604/689-9441** for information or register online at www.sunrun.com. Late April.

May

Vancouver International Marathon. Runners from all over the world gather to compete in a run through the streets. For information, call ✆ **604/872-2928.** First Sunday in May (May 4, 2003).

New Play Festival. Emerging playwrights show off their latest works at Granville Island. Call ✆ **604/685-6228** for more information. Mid-May.

International Children's Festival. Activities, plays, music, and crafts for children are featured at this annual event held in Vanier Park on False Creek. For information, call ✆ **604/708-5655.** Late May or early June (May 26-June 1, 2003).

June

SlugFest, Richmond Nature Park, 1185 Westminster Hwy. (✆ **604/718-6188**). Kids compete to find the biggest slug in the park. There are slug races as well as awards for the fastest, slowest, and ugliest slugs. Usually first weekend in June.

VanDusen Flower and Garden Show. Presented at the **VanDusen Botanical Garden,** 5251 Oak St., at 37th Street (✆ **604/878-9274**), this is Vancouver's premier flora gala. Early June.

National Aboriginal Day Community Celebration. This event offers the public an opportunity to learn about Canada's First Nations cultures. Many events take place at the **Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre,** 1607 E. Hastings at Commercial Street Call ✆ **604/251-4844** for information. June 21.

Alcan Dragon Boat Festival. Traditional dragon-boat racing is a part of the city's cultural scene. Watch the races from False Creek's north shore, where more than 150 local and international teams compete. Four stages of music, dance, and Chinese acrobatics are presented at the **Plaza of Nations** (✆ **604/688-2382**). Third week in June.

DuMaurier International Jazz Festival. More than 800 international jazz and blues players perform at 25 venues ranging from the Orpheum Theatre to the Roundhouse. Many free performances. Call the **Jazz Hotline** (✆ **604/872-5200**) or visit

www.jazzvancouver.com for more information. Late June/early July.

Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival, Vanier Park. The best backdrop for Shakespeare you will ever see! The Bard's plays are performed in a tent overlooking English Bay. Three different plays are shown every summer. Mid-June to late September, Tuesday through Sunday. Call the box office (✆ **604/739-0559** during the performance season or 604/737-0625 Oct-Apr) or check www.bardonthebeach.org.

Festival d'été francophone de Vancouver, various venues, includes street festival. A 4-day festival celebrating French music from around the world. Performers often include well-known Québec artists. Call ✆ **604/736-9806** for information. Mid-June.

July

Canada Day. Canada Place Pier (✆ **604/775-8687;** www.canadaplace.ca) hosts an all-day celebration that begins with the induction of new Canadian citizens. Music and dance are performed outdoors throughout the day. There's a 21-gun salute at noon, precision aerobatics teams perform overhead during the afternoon, and a nighttime fireworks display on the harbor tops off the festivities. Granville Island, Grouse Mountain, and other locations also host Canada Day events. July 1.

Steveston Salmon Festival, Steveston. A parade, salmon barbecue, special crafts exhibits, and other forms of entertainment take place in this heritage fishing village at the **Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site** (✆ **604/664-9009**). July 1.

Ecomarine Kayak Marathon. Competitors race sea kayaks in the Georgia Strait's open waters. The **Ecomarine Kayak Centre** (✆ **604/689-7575**), at Jericho Beach, hosts the race and can provide details. Mid-July.

Dancing on the Edge. Canadian and international dance groups perform modern and classic works at the **Firehall Arts Centre** and other venues. Call (✆ **604/689-0691;** www.dancingontheedge.org) for more information. Early to mid-July.

Vancouver Folk Music Festival. International folk music is performed outdoors at Jericho Beach Park. Contact the **Vancouver Folk Music Society** at ✆ **604/602-9798** for more information, or visit www.thefestival.bc.ca. Second or third weekend in July (July 18-20, 2003.)

Illuminares, Trout Lake Park. Evening lantern procession circling Trout Lake is a phantasmagoric experience. Drums, costumes,

fire-breathing apparitions, and lots of elaborate handcrafted lanterns—floating lanterns, kids' lanterns, 10-foot-high four-person lanterns. Various performances start at dusk. For info call ✆ **604/879-8611.** Third Saturday of July.

HSBC Power Smart Celebration of Light. Three international fireworks companies compete for a coveted title by launching their best displays accompanied by music over English Bay Beach. Don't miss the big finale on the fourth evening, which attracts as many as 500,000 spectators to the West End. (***Note:*** Because of the crowds, the West End's streets and Kits Point are closed to vehicles each night.) Other prime viewing locations include Kitsilano Beach and Jericho Beach. End of July through first week in August.

Vancouver International Comedy Festival. Comedians from all over Canada and the United States perform at a variety of venues around town. Contact Ticketmaster for tickets at ✆ **604/683-0883** or check www.comedyfest.com for more information. Last week of July, first week in August.

August

Powell Street Festival. An annual festival of Japanese culture includes music, dance, food, and more. Contact the Powell Street Festival Society (✆ **604/739-9388**) for more information. First weekend of August.

Festival Vancouver. The latest addition to the summer series, Festival Vancouver offers more than 50 extraordinary performances of music, including orchestral, choral, chamber, and world music plus opera and jazz. Call ✆ **604/221-0080** or check www.festivalvancouver.bc.ca for more information. Early August.

Vancouver Pride Parade. Sponsored by the Vancouver Pride Society, this colorful gay- and lesbian-pride parade covers a route along Denman and Davie streets, beginning at noon. Celebrations at many local gay and lesbian nightclubs take place around town on the same weekend as it is a long weekend for locals (BC Day weekend). For more information, contact the Pride Society's website (✆ **604/687-0955;** www.vanpride.bc.ca). First Sunday in August.

Abbottsford International Air Show. Barnstorming stuntmen and precision military pilots fly everything from Sopwith Camels to VTOLs and Stealth Bombers. This is one of the biggest air shows in the world. Call ✆ **604/852-8511** or visit www.abbotsfordairshow.com for more information. Second weekend in August.

Harmony Arts Festival, West Vancouver. This event highlights the talent of North Shore artists, offering free exhibitions, demonstrations, studio tours, theater, concerts, markets, and workshops. Call ✆ **604/925-7268** or visit www.harmonyarts.net for more information. First and second week of August.

Pacific National Exhibition. The year 2002 was supposed to be the final one for the 10th-largest North American country-style fair, as the city council has voted to convert the grounds to green space. However, the city's favorite fair has been granted a new lease on life and negotiations are under way to obtain a permanent stay at its current location. Offerings include one of North America's best all-wooden roller coasters, many other rides, big-name entertainment, and a demolition derby. Special events include livestock demonstrations, logger sports competitions, fashion shows, and a midway. Contact the Pacific National Exhibition (✆ **604/253-2311;** www.pne.bc.ca) for more details. Mid-August to Labour Day.

September

The Fringe—Vancouver's Theatre Festival. This is the best place to catch new theater. Centered around Granville Island and with venues around the Commercial Drive area (the Havana and the Cultch) and Yaletown's Roundhouse, the Fringe Festival features more than 500 innovative and original shows performed by over 100 groups from across Canada and around the world. All plays cost under C$12 (US$7.80). Call ✆ **604/257-0350** or see www.vancouverfringe.com for more info. First and second week of September.

The North Shore Heritage Weekend, North and West Vancouver. A full weekend of walking and boat tours, craft and historic displays, a vintage-car exhibition, and afternoon teas at various locations on the North Shore, from Deep Cove to Horseshoe Bay. Call ✆ **604/987-5618** for info. Third weekend in September.

Mid-Autumn Moon Festival, Dr. Sun Yat-sen Garden. This outdoor Chinese celebration includes a lantern festival, storytelling, music, and, of course, moon cakes. For more info call the Garden at ✆ **604/662-3207.** Early to mid-September, according to the lunar cycle (15th day of the 8th month of the Chinese calendar).

October

Vancouver International Film Festival. This highly respected film festival features 250 new works, revivals, and retrospectives, representing filmmakers from 40 countries. Asian films are particularly

well represented. Attendance reaches more than 140,000 viewers, not including the stars and celebrities who appear annually. Call ✆ **604/685-0260** or visit www.viff.org for details. Late September and first 2 weeks of October.

Vancouver International Writers and Readers Festival. Public readings conducted by Canadian and international authors as well as writers' workshops take place on Granville Island and at other locations in the lower mainland. Call ✆ **604/681-6330** or try www.writersfest.bc.ca for details. Mid-October.

Parade of Lost Souls, Grandview Park. A bizarre and intriguing procession takes place around Commercial Drive to honor the dead and chase away bad luck. For more information, call ✆ **604/879-8611.** Last Saturday of October.

November

Remembrance Day. Celebrated throughout Canada, this day commemorates Canadian soldiers who gave their lives in war. Vintage military aircraft fly over Stanley Park and Canada Place, and, at noon, a 21-gun salute is fired from Deadman's Island. November 11.

Christmas Craft and Gift Market, Van Dusen Botanical Garden. Popular craft and gift market in a beautiful garden setting. For info, call ✆ **604/878-9274.** November and December.

December

Christmas Carol Ship Parade, Vancouver Harbour. Harbour cruise ships decorated with colorful Christmas lights sail around English Bay, while onboard guests sip cider and sing their way through the canon of Christmas carols. Throughout December.

Festival of Lights, Van Dusen Botanical Garden. Throughout December, the garden is transformed into a magical holiday land with seasonal displays and over 20,000 lights illuminating the garden. Call ✆ **604/878-9274** for info. December.

First Night. Vancouver closes its downtown streets for revelers in the city's New Year's Eve performing-arts festival and alcohol-free party. Events and venues change from year to year. Contact **Tourism Vancouver** at ✆ **604/683-2000** for more information. December 31.

4 Tips for Travelers with Special Needs

FOR TRAVELERS WITH DISABILITIES

According to *We're Accessible,* a newsletter for travelers with disabilities, Vancouver is "the most accessible city in the world." There are

more than 14,000 sidewalk wheelchair ramps, and motorized wheelchairs are a common sight in the downtown area. The stairs along Robson Square have built-in ramps, and most major attractions and venues have ramps or level walkways for easy access. Many Vancouver hotels have at least partial wheelchair accessibility, if not rooms built completely to suit. Most SkyTrain stations and the SeaBus are wheelchair accessible, and most bus routes are lift equipped. For more information about accessible public transportation, contact **Translink** (✆ **604/953-3333;** www.translink.bc.ca; or phone the department of accessible transit at 604/540-3400) and ask for its brochure, *Rider's Guide to Accessible Transit.*

Many downtown hotels are also equipping rooms with visual smoke alarms and other facilities for hearing-impaired guests. You'll also notice that downtown crosswalks have beeping alert signs to guide visually impaired pedestrians.

FOR GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELERS

What San Francisco is to the United States, Vancouver is to Canada—the laid-back town on the coast with a large, thriving gay community. Much of the social activity centers in the West End—particularly Denman and Davie streets—where many gay singles and couples live. The best way to find out what's going on is to pick up a copy of the biweekly gay and lesbian tabloid, *Xtra! West,* which is available throughout the West End. To obtain a copy ahead of time, contact *Xtra! West,* 501-1033 Davie St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1M7 (✆ **604/684-9696**). Also check out the **Vancouver Pride Society** website (www.vanpride.bc.ca) for upcoming special events, including the annual Vancouver Pride Parade. Otherwise, here are some suggestions: Book a room at the West End Guest House or the Sylvia Hotel (p. 60) and head over to one of the numerous West End and downtown clubs such as the Odyssey (p. 168), or have coffee at Delaney's on Denman Street or at the Edge on Davie Street.

FOR SENIORS

Seniors often qualify for discounts at hotels and attractions and on public transit throughout Vancouver. Make a habit of asking. You'll be pleasantly surprised at the number of discounts for which you're eligible. Discount transit passes for persons over 65 (with proof of age) may be purchased at shops in Vancouver that display a FARE-DEALER SIGN (Safeway, 7-Eleven, and most newsstands). To locate a **FareDealer vendor,** contact BC Transit (✆ **604/521-0400**). If you or your mate is over 50 and you are not already a member of the **AARP** (3200 E. Carson, Lakewood, CA 90712; ✆ **800/424-3410;**

www.aarp.org), consider joining. The AARP card is valuable for additional restaurant and travel bargains throughout North America.

FOR FAMILIES

Vancouver is one of the most child-friendly, cosmopolitan cities around. Where else would you find a Kids Market that's filled with children's stores and is located next to a free water park that's equipped with water guns and changing rooms? In addition to the standard attractions and sights, you'll find a lot of adventurous, outdoor, and free stuff that both you and your kids will enjoy (see "Especially for Kids," p. 115). You can try entertaining restaurants that aren't cafeteria-style or fast-food establishments, but are decidedly kid-friendly. Some hotels even offer milk and cookies to kids for evening snacks, plus special menus and child-size terry robes.

FOR STUDENTS

This is definitely a student-oriented area. The University of British Columbia (UBC) in the Point Grey area, Burnaby's Simon Fraser University, and a number of smaller schools contribute to the enormous student population. Student travelers have a lot of free and inexpensive entertainment options, both day and night. The nightlife is active, centering around Yaletown, Granville Street, the West End, and Kitsilano. Pick up a copy of *The Georgia Straight* to find out what's happening. Many attractions and theaters offer discounts if you have your student ID with you. While many establishments will accept a school ID, the surest way to obtain student discounts is with an International Student Identity Card (ISIC), which is available to any full-time high-school or college student from the **Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE),** 205 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017 (✆ **212/822-2700**), or from your local campus student society. The CIEE has offices in major U.S. cities. To find the location nearest you, call ✆ **800/438-2643** or check the website www.ciee.org.

5 Getting to Vancouver

BY PLANE

THE MAJOR AIRLINES The Open Skies agreement between the United States and Canada has made flying to Vancouver easier than ever. Daily direct flights between major U.S. cities and Vancouver are offered by **Air Canada** (✆ 888/247-2262 or 800/661-3936), **United Airlines** (✆ 800/241-6522), **American**

Airlines (✆ 800/433-7300), **Continental** (✆ 800/231-0856), and **Northwest Airlines** (✆ 800/447-4747). Direct flights on major carriers serve Phoenix, Dallas, New York, Houston, Minneapolis, Reno, San Francisco, and many other cities.

For domestic flights, travelers are left only a few options. **Air Canada** (✆ **888/247-2262**) operates flights to Vancouver from all major Canadian cities, easily connecting with some of the regional airlines. The best and cheapest option for travelers in Western

Tips Air Travel Security

Expect a lengthy check-in process and extensive delays. Although regulations vary from airline to airline, you can expedite the process by taking the following steps:

- **Arrive early.** Arrive at the airport *at least* 1½ hours before your departure time for domestic flights, earlier for international flights.
- **Carry plenty of documentation.** A government-issued photo ID is required. With an E-ticket, you may be required to have with you printed confirmation of purchase, and perhaps even the credit card with which you bought your ticket. Be sure that your ID is up-to-date, as an expired driver's license or passport may keep you from boarding the plane altogether.
- **Know what you can carry on—and what you can't.** Travelers in the United States are now limited to one carry-on bag, plus one personal bag (such as a purse or a briefcase). The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has also issued a list of restricted carry-on items that includes knives (including the Swiss Army variety) and corkscrews; for the latest restrictions, visit **www.tsa.gov**.
- **Prepare to be searched.** Expect spot-checks, both at the security and boarding gates. Electronic items, such as laptops and cellphones, should be readied for additional screening.
- **Remember: No ticket, no gate access.** Only ticketed passengers will be allowed beyond the screener checkpoints, except for those travelers with specific medical or parental needs.

Tips All About E-Ticketing

Only yesterday **electronic tickets (E-tickets)** were the fast and easy ticket-free alternative to paper tickets. E-tickets allowed passengers to avoid long lines at airport check-in, all the while saving the airlines money on postage and labor. With the increased security measures in airports, however, an E-ticket no longer guarantees an accelerated check-in. You often can't go straight to the boarding gate, even if you have no bags to check. You'll probably need to show your printed E-ticket receipt or confirmation of purchase, as well as a photo ID, and sometimes even the credit card with which you purchased your E-ticket. That said, buying an E-ticket is still a fast, convenient way to book a flight; instead of having to wait for a paper ticket to come through the mail, you can book your fare by phone or on the computer, and the airline will immediately confirm by fax or e-mail. In addition, airlines often offer frequent flier miles as incentive for electronic bookings.

Canada is **Westjet** (✆ **888/WEST-JET** or 800/538-5696). Tickets can also be purchased online at www.westjet.com. Westjet operates regular flights from Vancouver to Prince George, Kelowna, Edmonton, Calgary and further afield.

Non-U.S. and non-Canadian travelers can take advantage of the **Visit USA** air passes offered by **Continental** (✆ **800/231-0856**) and similar coupons from **Air Canada** (✆ **800/776-3000**). These tickets must be purchased outside North America in conjunction with an international fare. For roughly an additional US$439, you can get three flight coupons that allow you to fly anywhere on the continent (price varies seasonally). You can buy up to a maximum of nine coupons for US$769. Low-season discounts are also available.

BY TRAIN

VIA Rail Canada, 1150 Station St., Vancouver (✆ **800/561-8630;** www.viarail.ca), connects with Amtrak at Winnipeg, Manitoba. From there, you travel on a spectacular route that runs between Calgary and Vancouver. Lake Louise's beautiful alpine scenery is just part of this enjoyable journey. **Amtrak** (✆ **800/872-7245;**

www.amtrak.com) has regular service from Seattle and also has a direct route from San Diego to Vancouver. It stops at all major U.S. West Coast cities and takes a little under 2 days to complete the entire journey. Fares are US$190. Substantial seasonal discounts are available. Travelers can also purchase a 30-day North America **Railpass** for US$475 to US$675 at peak season. The pass can be used for rail connections to Vancouver.

BC Rail, 1311 W. First St., North Vancouver (✆ **604/631-3500;** www.bcrail.com), also connects Vancouver to Whistler and other cities in the province. The trip to Whistler is 2½ hours each way, and the fare includes breakfast or dinner. A one-way ticket costs C$49 (US$32) for adults, C$27 (US$18) seniors and children.

BY BUS

Greyhound Bus Lines (✆ **604/482-8747;** www.greyhound.com) and **Pacific Coach Lines** (✆ **604/662-8074;** www.pacificcoach.com) have their terminals at the Pacific Central Station, 1150 Station St. Greyhound Canada's **Canada Pass** offers 15 or 30 days of unlimited travel for C$399 to C$499 (US$259-US$324). Pacific Coach Lines provides service between Vancouver and Victoria. The cost is C$29 (US$19) one-way per adult and includes the ferry; daily departures are between 5:45am and 7:45pm. Pacific Coach Lines will also pick up passengers from most downtown hotels. Call ✆ **604/662-8074** to reserve. **Quick Coach Lines** (✆ **604/940-4428**) connects Vancouver to the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. The bus leaves from Vancouver's Sandman Inn, 180 W. Georgia St., can pick up passengers from most major hotels and stops at the Vancouver International Airport. The 4½-hour ride costs C$44 (US$29) one-way or C$79 (US$51) round-trip.

BY CAR

You'll probably be driving into Vancouver along one of two routes. **U.S. Interstate 5** from Seattle becomes **Highway 99** when you cross the border at the Peace Arch. The 210km (130-mile) drive takes about 2½ hours. You'll drive through the cities of White Rock, Delta, and Richmond, pass under the Fraser River through the George Massey Tunnel, and cross the Oak Street Bridge. The highway ends there and becomes Oak Street, a very busy urban thoroughfare. Turn left onto 70th Avenue. (A small sign suspended above the left lane at the intersection of Oak St. and 70th Ave. reads CITY CENTRE.) Six blocks later, turn right onto Granville Street. This street heads directly into downtown Vancouver on the Granville Street Bridge.

Trans-Canada Highway 1 is a limited-access freeway running all the way to Vancouver's eastern boundary, where it crosses the Second Narrows bridge to North Vancouver. When traveling on Highway 1 from the east, exit at Cassiar Street and turn left at the first light onto Hastings Street (Hwy. 7A), which is adjacent to Exhibition Park. Follow Hastings Street 6.4km (4 miles) into downtown. When coming to Vancouver from Whistler or parts north, take Exit 13 (the sign says TAYLOR WAY, BRIDGE TO VANCOUVER) and cross the Lions Gate Bridge into Vancouver's West End.

BY SHIP & FERRY

The **Canada Place** cruise-ship terminal at the base of Burrard Street (✆ **604/665-9085**) is a city landmark. Topped by five eye-catching white Teflon sails, Canada Place Pier juts out into the Burrard Inlet and is at the edge of the downtown financial district. **Princess Cruises, Holland America, Royal Caribbean, Crystal Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Lines, World Explorer Majesty Cruise Line,** and **Hanseatic, Seabourn,** and **Carnival** cruise lines dock at Canada Place and the nearby Ballantyne Pier to board passengers headed for Alaska via British Columbia's Inside Passage. They carry over one million 700,000 passengers annually on their nearly 350 Vancouver-Alaska cruises. Public-transit buses and taxis greet new arrivals, but you can also easily walk to many major hotels, including the Pan-Pacific, Waterfront Centre, and Hotel Vancouver. (If you're considering an Alaska cruise, late May and all of June generally offer the best weather, the most daylight, and the best sightseeing opportunities.)

BC Ferries (✆ **888/223-3779** or 250/386-3431; www.bcferries.bc.ca) has three routes connecting Vancouver to points on Vancouver Island. Its large ferries offer onboard facilities such as restaurants, snack bars, gift shops, business-center desks with modem connections, and indoor lounges. The one-way fare in peak season is C$9.50 (US$6) for adults, C$4.75 (US$3) for children 5 to 11, and C$35(US$22.5) per car. Children under 5 are free. In the summer it is advisable to reserve a space when traveling with a vehicle, especially on long weekends and to and from the Gulf Islands. Call BC Ferries reservations at ✆ **888/724-5223.**

To or from Victoria, the most direct route is the **Tsawwassen-Swartz Bay ferry,** which operates daily between 7am and 9pm. Ferries run every 2 hours. Check for extra sailings on holidays or peak travel season. The actual crossing takes 95 minutes. Take Highway 17 from Tsawwassen until it merges with Highway 99 just

before the George Massey Tunnel; then follow the driving directions to Vancouver given in "By Car" above.

The **Mid-Island Express** operates between Tsawwassen and Duke Point, just south of Nanaimo. The 2-hour crossing runs eight times daily between 5:15am and 10:45pm.

The **Horseshoe Bay-Nanaimo ferry** has eight daily sailings, leaving Horseshoe Bay near West Vancouver and arriving 95 minutes later in Nanaimo. To reach Vancouver from Horseshoe Bay, take the Trans-Canada Highway (Highways 1 and 99) east and then take Exit 13 (Taylor Way) to the Lions Gate Bridge and downtown Vancouver's West End.

BY PACKAGE TOUR

Air Canada (✆ **888/247-2262**) offers a number of fly/drive packages. And **SNV International,** 402-1045 Howe St., Vancouver (✆ **604/683-5101**), specializes in vacation packages to Vancouver.

6 Planning Your Trip Online

With a mouse, a modem, and a certain do-it-yourself determination, Internet users can tap into the same travel-planning databases that were once accessible only to travel agents. Sites such as **Travelocity, Expedia,** and **Orbitz** allow consumers to comparison shop for airfares, book flights, learn of last-minute bargains, and reserve hotel rooms and rental cars.

But don't fire your travel agent just yet. Although online booking sites offer tips and hard data to help you bargain shop, they cannot endow you with the hard-earned experience that makes a seasoned, reliable travel agent an invaluable resource, even in the Internet age. And for consumers with a complex itinerary, a trusty travel agent is still the best way to arrange the most direct flights to and from the best airports.

Still, there's no denying the Internet's emergence as a powerful tool in researching and plotting travel time. The benefits of researching your trip online can be well worth the effort:

- **Last-minute specials,** known as "E-savers," such as weekend deals or Internet-only fares, are offered by airlines to fill empty seats. Most of these are announced on Tuesday or Wednesday and must be purchased online. They are only valid for travel that weekend, but some can be booked weeks or months in advance. Sign up for weekly e-mail alerts at airline websites (p. 21) or check mega-sites that compile comprehensive lists of

Frommers.com: The Complete Travel Resource

For an excellent travel-planning resource, we highly recommend **Frommers.com** (www.frommers.com). We're a little biased, of course, but we guarantee that you'll find the travel tips, reviews, monthly vacation giveaways, and online-booking capabilities thoroughly indispensable. Among the special features are our popular **Message Boards,** where Frommer's readers post queries and share advice (sometimes even our authors show up to answer questions); **Frommers.com Newsletter,** for the latest travel bargains and inside travel secrets; and Frommer's **Destinations Section,** where you'll get expert travel tips, hotel and dining recommendations, and advice on the sights to see for more than 2,500 destinations around the globe. When your research is done, the **Online Reservation System** (www.frommers.com/book_a_trip) takes you to Frommer's favorite sites for booking your vacation at affordable prices.

E-savers, such as Smarter Living (www.smarterliving.com) or WebFlyer (www.webflyer.com).

- Some sites will send you **e-mail notification** when a cheap fare becomes available to your favorite destination. Some will also tell you when fares to a particular destination are lowest.
- The best of the travel planning sites are now **highly personalized;** they track your frequent-flier miles and store your seating and meal preferences, tentative itineraries, and credit-card information, letting you plan trips or check agendas quickly.
- All major airlines offer **incentives**—bonus frequent-flier miles, Internet-only discounts, sometimes even free cellphone rentals—when you purchase online or buy an E-ticket.
- Advances in mobile technology provide business travelers and other frequent travelers with **the ability to check flight status, change plans, or get specific directions** from handheld computing devices, mobile phones, and pagers. Some sites will e-mail or page a passenger if a flight is delayed.

TRAVEL PLANNING & BOOKING SITES

The best travel planning and booking sites cast a wide net, offering domestic and international flights, hotel and rental-car bookings, plus news, destination information, and deals on cruises and vacation packages. Keep in mind that free (one-time) registration is

often required for booking. Because several airlines are no longer willing to pay commissions on tickets sold by online travel agencies, be aware that these online agencies will either charge a $10 surcharge if you book a ticket on that carrier—or neglect to offer those air carriers' offerings.

The sites in this section are not intended to be a comprehensive list, but rather a discriminating selection to get you started. Recognition is given to sites based on their content value and ease of use and is not paid for—unlike some website rankings, which are based on payment. ***Remember:*** This is a press-time snapshot of leading websites—some undoubtedly will have evolved or moved by the time you read this.

- **Travelocity** (www.travelocity.com or http://frommers.travelocity.com) and **Expedia** (www.expedia.com) are the most long-standing and reputable sites, each offering excellent selections and searches for complete vacation packages. Travelers search by destination and dates coupled with how much they are willing to spend.
- The latest buzz in the online travel world is about **Orbitz** (www.orbitz.com), a site launched by United, Delta, Northwest, American, and Continental airlines. It shows all possible fares for your desired trip, offering fares lower than those available through travel agents.
- **Qixo** (www.qixo.com) is another powerful search engine that allows you to search for flights and hotel rooms on 20 other travel-planning sites (such as Travelocity) at once. Qixo sorts results by price, after which you can book your travel directly through the site.

SMART E-SHOPPING

The savvy traveler is one armed with good information. Here are a few tips to help you navigate the Internet successfully and safely.

- **Know when sales start.** Last-minute deals may vanish in minutes. If you have a favorite booking site or airline, find out when last-minute deals are released to the public.
- **Shop around.** Compare results from different sites and airlines—and against a travel agent's best fare, if you can. If possible, try a range of times and alternate airports before you make a purchase.
- **Follow the rules of the trade.** Book in advance, and choose an off-peak time and date if possible. Some sites will tell you when fares to a particular destination tend to be cheapest.

- **Stay secure.** Book only through secure sites (some airline sites are not secure). Look for a key icon (Netscape) or a padlock (Internet Explorer) at the bottom of your Web browser before you enter credit card information or other personal data.
- **Avoid online auctions.** Sites that auction airline tickets and frequent-flier miles are the number-one perpetrators of Internet fraud, according to the National Consumers League.
- **Maintain a paper trail.** If you book an E-ticket, print out a confirmation, or write down your confirmation number, and keep it safe and accessible—or your trip could be a virtual one!

BY AIR: TRANSPORTATION SITES

Below are the websites for the major airlines operating throughout North America. These sites offer schedules and booking, and most of the airlines have E-saver alerts for weekend deals and late-breaking bargains.

- **Air Canada.** www.aircanada.com
- **America West.** www.americawest.com
- **American Airlines.** www.aa.com
- **Continental Airlines.** www.continental.com
- **Delta.** www.delta.com
- **Horizon Air.** www.horizonair.com
- **Northwest Airlines.** www.nwa.com
- **United Airlines.** www.ual.com
- **WestJet.** www.westjet.com

2 Getting to Know Vancouver

Losing yourself wandering around a fascinating new neighborhood is part of the joy of traveling. While that's certainly possible on a metaphorical level in Vancouver, getting physically lost is truly difficult—all you have to do to find your bearings is look up. The mountains are always in sight, and they're always north. If you're facing them, east is to your right, west is to your left, and the back of your head is pointing south. That one tip should keep you pointed in the right direction no matter where your exploration of the city takes you. The rest of this chapter offers more detailed information on how to find your way around town.

1 Orientation

ARRIVING

BY PLANE **Vancouver International Airport** is 13km (8 miles) south of downtown Vancouver on uninhabited Sea Island, bordered on three sides by Richmond and the Fraser River delta.

Tourist information kiosks on Level 2 of the Main and International arrival terminals (✆ **604/207-0953**) are open daily from 8am to 11pm. **Parking** is available at the airport for both loading passengers and long-term stays (✆ **604/207-7077** for all airport services inquiries). A **shuttle bus** links the Main and International terminals to the South Terminal, where smaller and private aircraft are docked.

There is an international departure surcharge of C$15 (US$9.75) per person for international air travelers outside of North America, C$10 (US$6.50) for passengers traveling within North America (including Hawaii and Mexico), and C$5 (US$3.25) for passengers on flights within British Columbia or the Yukon.

Leaving the Airport The pale green **YVR Airporter** (✆ **604/946-8866**) provides **airport bus service** to downtown Vancouver's major hotels. It leaves from Level 2 of the Main Terminal every 15 minutes daily from 6:30am until midnight. The 30-minute ride to

the downtown area whisks you through central Vancouver before taking the Granville Street Bridge into downtown Vancouver. The one-way fare is C$12 (US$7.80) for adults, C$8 (US$5.20) for seniors, and C$5 (US$3.25) for children. Bus service back to the airport leaves from selected downtown hotels every half-hour between 5:35am and 10:55pm. Scheduled pickups serve the Bus Station, Four Seasons, Hotel Vancouver, Waterfront Centre Hotel, Georgian Court, Sutton Place, Landmark, and others. Ask the bus driver on the way in or ask your hotel concierge for the nearest pickup stop and time.

Getting to and from the airport with **public transit** is a pain. Buses are slow, and you have to transfer at least once to get downtown. Given that the YVR Airporter bus costs only C$12 (US$7.80), the hassle probably isn't worth the savings. If you insist, however, bus no. 424 will take you to the Airport Station. From there you take bus no. 98 that will take you into downtown Vancouver. BC Transit fares are C$2 (US$1.30) during off-peak hours and C$3 (US$1.95) during weekdays until 6:30pm. But transfers are free in any direction within a 90-minute period.

The average **taxi** fare from the airport to a downtown Vancouver hotel is approximately C$25 (US$16) plus tip. Because the meter charges for time when the cab is stuck in traffic and some hotels are closer to the airport than others, the fare can run up to C$40 (US$26). LimoJet Gold Express (✆ **604/273-1331**) offers flat-rate stretch-limousine service at C$34.25 (US$22) per trip to the airport (not per person) from any downtown location (other city destinations cost only a few dollars more), plus tip, and can easily accommodate six to eight people. The drivers accept all major credit cards.

Most major **car-rental firms** have airport counters and shuttles.

BY TRAIN & BUS The main **Vancouver railway station** is at 1150 Station St., near Main Street and Terminal Avenue just south of Chinatown. You can reach downtown Vancouver from there by cab for about C$10 (US$6.50). There are plenty of taxis at the station entrance. One block from the station is the SkyTrain's Main Street Station (see section 2, "Getting Around"). Within minutes, you're downtown. The Granville and Waterfront stations are two and four stops away, respectively.

Greyhound Bus Lines and **Pacific Coach Lines** also have their terminals at the Pacific Central Station (1150 Station St.).

For information on arriving **by ferry,** see "Getting to Vancouver," on p. 13.

VISITOR INFORMATION

TOURIST OFFICES & PUBLICATIONS **The Vancouver Tourist Info Centre,** 200 Burrard St. (✆ **604/683-2000;** www.tourismvancouver.com), is your single best travel information source about Vancouver and the North Shore. If you've ever been to London, you'll be happy to know that Tourism Vancouver is similar to the British Tourist Authority. That means you can buy bus passes and pick up maps, brochures, and travel guides. The staff is outgoing and can be very helpful if you need directions or recommendations. If you have trouble finding accommodations, the office has catalogs of registered hotels and B&Bs; the staff will even make reservations for you. The Info Centre is open from May to Labour Day daily from 8am to 6pm; the rest of the year, it's open Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5pm and Saturday from 9am to 5pm.

If you plan to see more of this beautiful province, **Super Natural British Columbia** (✆ **800/663-6000** or 604/663-6000; www.hellobc.com) can help you.

Be sure to pick up a copy of the free weekly tabloid ***The Georgia Straight*** (✆ **604/730-7000**). It provides up-to-date schedules of concerts, lectures, art exhibits, plays, recitals, and other happenings. The *Straight* can be found all over the city in cafes, bookshops, and restaurants. Equally good—and with dollops more attitude—is the glossy city magazine ***Vancouver*** (✆ **604/877-7732**). "VanMag," as it's also known, is available on newsstands and on the Web at www.vanmag.com.

Two free monthly tabloids, ***BC Parent*** (✆ **604/221-0366**) and ***West Coast Families*** (✆ **604/689-1331**), are geared for families with young children, listing many kid-friendly current events. Gay and lesbian travelers will want to pick up a copy of ***Xtra! West*** (✆ **604/684-9696**), a free biweekly tabloid available in shops and restaurants throughout the West End.

CITY LAYOUT

With four different bodies of water lapping at its edges and mile after mile of shoreline, Vancouver's geography can seem a bit convoluted. That's part of the city's charm, of course, and visitors normally don't find it too hard to get their bearings. Think of the downtown peninsula as being like an upraised thumb on the mitten-shaped Vancouver mainland. Stanley Park, the West End, Yaletown, and Vancouver's business and financial center are located on the "thumb," which is bordered to the west by English Bay, to the north by Burrard Inlet, and to the south by False Creek. The

mainland part of the city, the mitten, is mostly residential, with a sprinkling of businesses along main arterial streets. Both mainland and peninsula are covered by a simple rectilinear street pattern.

FINDING AN ADDRESS In many Vancouver addresses, the suite or room number precedes the building number. For instance, 100-1250 Robson St. is Suite 100 at 1250 Robson Street.

In downtown Vancouver, Chinatown's **Carrall Street** is the east-west axis from which streets are numbered and designated. Westward, numbers increase progressively to Stanley Park; eastward, numbers increase approaching Commercial Drive. For example, 400 W. Pender would be 4 blocks from Carrall Street heading toward downtown; 400 E. Pender would be 4 blocks on the opposite side of Carrall Street.

Similarly, the low numbers on north-south streets start on the Canada Place Pier side and increase southward in increments of 100 per block (the 600 block of Thurlow Street is 2 blocks from the 800 block) toward False Creek and Granville Island.

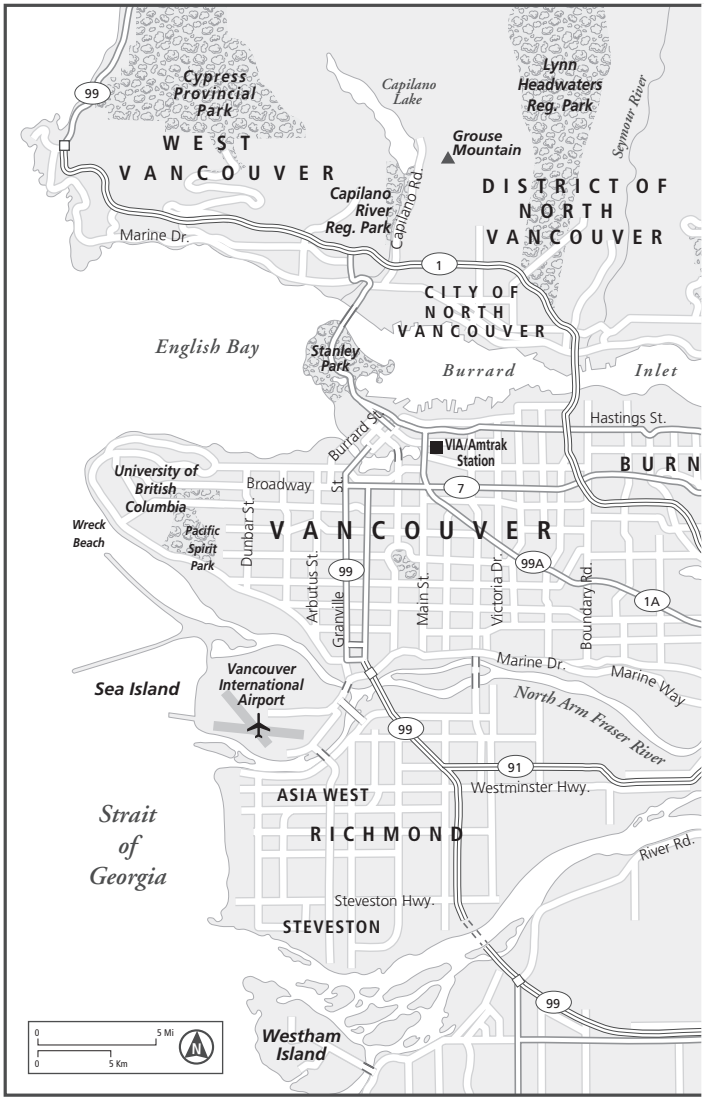
Off the peninsula the system works the same, but **Ontario Street** is the east-west axis. Also, all east-west roads are avenues (for example, Fourth Ave.), while streets (for example, Main St.) run exclusively north-south.

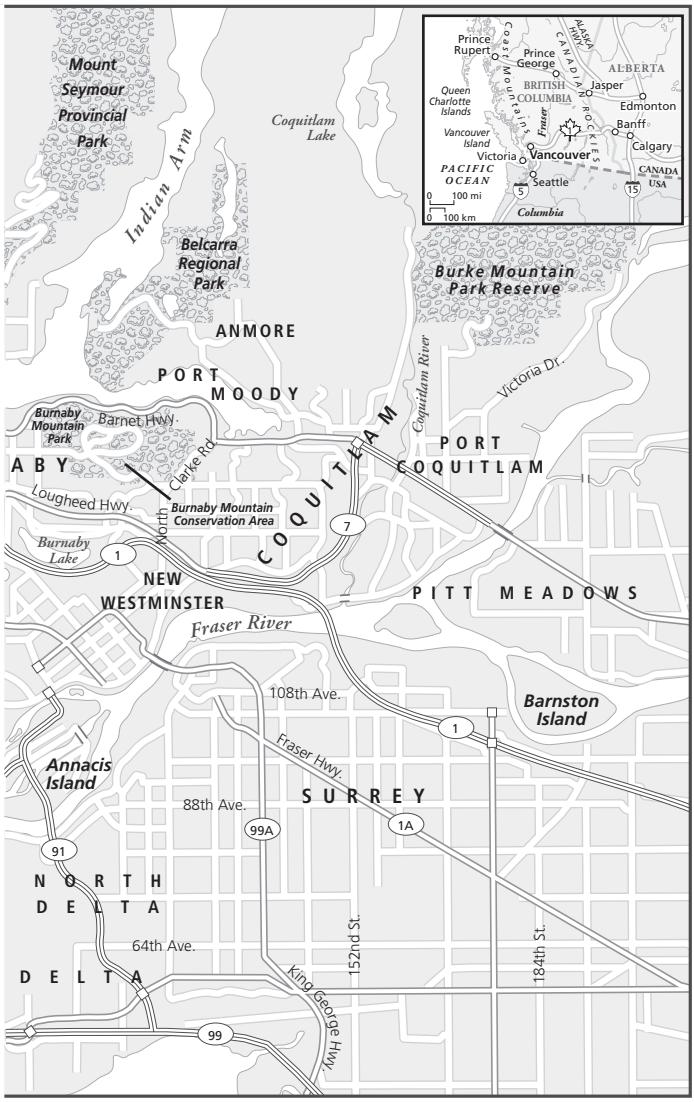
STREET MAPS The Travel Info Centres (see "Visitor Information," above) and most hotels can provide you with detailed downtown maps. A good all-around metropolitan area map is the Rand McNally Vancouver city map, which is available for C$3 (US$1.95) at the Vancouver Airport Tourism Centre kiosk. If you're an auto-club member, the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) map is also good. It's not for sale, but is free to both AAA and CAA members and is available at AAA offices across North America. **International Travel Maps and Books,** 539 West Pender St. (✆ **604/687-3320**), has the city's most extensive selection of Vancouver and British Columbia maps and specialty guidebooks.

VANCOUVER'S NEIGHBORHOODS IN BRIEF

Downtown Vancouver's commercial and office core runs from Nelson Street north to the harbor, with Homer as the eastern edge, and a more ragged boundary running roughly along Burrard Street to form the western border. The truly prime office space is on or near Georgia Street. Howe Street, home of the (in)famous Vancouver Stock Exchange, is the local synonym for flashy and slightly disreputable wealth. Hotels cluster mostly in the

Greater Vancouver




Mount Seymour Provincial Park
Indian Arm
Coquitlam Lake
Belcarra Regional Park
Burke Mountain Park Reserve
ANMORE
PORT MOODY
Coquitlam River
Victoria Dr.
Burnaby Mountain Park
Barnet Hwy.
ABY
Clarke Rd
PORT COQUITLAM
COQUITLAM
Lougheed Hwy.
North Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area
Burnaby Lake
NEW WESTMINSTER
PITT MEADOWS
Fraser River
108th Ave.
Barnston Island
Fraser Hwy.
Annacis Island
88th Ave.
SURREY
NORTH DELTA
64th Ave.
152nd St.
184th St.
DELTA
King George Hwy
Prince Rupert
Prince George
Queen Charlotte Islands
Vancouver Island
Victoria
Vancouver
Seattle
PACIFIC OCEAN
Coast Mountains
Fraser
Columbia
ALASKA HWY.
CANADIAN ROCKIES
ALBERTA
BRITISH COLUMBIA
Jasper
Edmonton
Banff
Calgary
CANADA
USA
0 100 mi
0 100 km

Tips What's West

The thing to keep in mind, when figuring out what's where in Vancouver, is that this is a city where property is king, and the word "west" has such positive connotations that folks have always gone to great lengths to associate it with their particular patch of real estate. Thus we have the **West End** and the **West Side** and **West Vancouver,** which improbably enough is located immediately beside **North Vancouver.** It can be a bit confusing for newcomers, but fortunately each west has its own distinct character. The West End is a high-rise residential neighborhood located on the downtown peninsula. The West Side is one whole half of Vancouver, from Ontario Street west to the University of British Columbia. (The more working-class **East Side** covers the mainland portion of the city, from Ontario St. east to Boundary Rd.) Very tony West Vancouver is a city to itself on the far side of Burrard Inlet. Together with its more middle-class neighbor, North Vancouver, it forms an area called the **North Shore.**

northern third of downtown, many of them near the water's edge. Walking is a good bet for getting around, day and night. Unlike many North American cities, lots of people live in and around Vancouver's business district, so the area is always populated.

The West End A fascinating neighborhood of high-rise condos mixed with old Edwardian homes, the West End has within its borders all the necessities of life: great cafes, good nightclubs, many and varied bookshops, and some of the best restaurants in the city. That so many can live so well in such a small area is partially due to the interesting and eclectic architecture, but mostly it's thanks to the beautiful surroundings—the Pacific Ocean laps against the West End on two sides, Burrard Inlet to the north and English Bay to the south, while Stanley Park occupies the western edge. Burrard Street forms the West End's eastern border.

Gastown The oldest section of Vancouver, Gastown was named after Vancouver's first settler, riverboat skipper and saloon keeper Jack Deighton, nicknamed "Gassy" thanks to his long-winded habits of speech. It was rebuilt in brick after the 1886 fire wiped out the original wooden city. Gastown's cobblestone streets and late Victorian architecture make it well worth a visit, despite a rather heavy infestation of curio shops and souvenir stands. It

lies to the east of downtown, in the 6 square blocks between Water and Hastings streets and Cambie and Columbia streets.

Chinatown Located south of Hastings Street, between Gore and Carrall to the east and west, and Keefer Street to the south, Vancouver's Chinatown is not large, but it is intense. Fishmongers stand calling out their wares in Cantonese before a shop filled with crabs, eels, geoducks, and bullfrogs. Elderly Chinese women haggle over produce, while their husbands hunt for deer antler or dried sea horse at a traditional Chinese apothecary. Inside any one of a dozen restaurants, meanwhile, entire extended families—father, mother, grandparents, grown children, and grandkids—sit at a single, large round table, consuming a half-dozen plates of succulent Cantonese cooking.

Yaletown Vancouver's former warehouse district—located below Granville Street and above Pacific Boulevard, from Davie Street over to Smithe Street—Yaletown has long since become an area of apartment lofts, nightclubs, restaurants, high-end furniture shops, and a fledgling multimedia biz. The conversion was less an organic occurrence than a calculated agreement between City Hall and area landowners. It took a long while to work (15 years), but the area has finally come into its own.

False Creek North (Concorde Pacific) Stretching along Pacific Boulevard on the north shore of False Creek, Concorde's 30-odd high-rise towers are bright, shiny, and brand-spanking new. Perhaps a bit too new—like a pair of runners that need to lose gloss before they'll really be comfortable. The area is worth visiting, if only to admire one of the largest—and so far most successful—urban redevelopment projects on the continent.

Granville Island Some 20 years ago, a clever lad in the federal government had the bright idea of redeveloping this former industrial site into something more people-oriented. The result would not be a park, though there are parks on the island. Nor would it be offices, though there are those, too. In fact, there's a bit of everything, including crafts shops, a boatyard, an art school, a public market, a pair of theaters, a hotel, and several pubs and restaurants. There's even a bit of heavy industry. The result is hard to describe, but well worth a visit. Just don't bring a car. There are 97,000 visitors every day, and only three parking spaces. Or that's what it feels like, anyway.

Kitsilano Back in the '60s, Kitsilano was Canada's Haight-Ashbury, a slightly seedy enclave of coffeehouses, head shops, and lots of long-haired hippies. Its days as a counterculture hotbed

have long since drifted away on a wave of fragrant smoke, but the area—known as Kits—remains one of Vancouver's most popular and sought-after neighborhoods. The attraction is the mixture of affordable apartments and 1920s Craftsman homes, together with funky shops, great restaurants, and pleasant walkable streets. And then, of course, there's Kits Beach, that bastion of bronzed skin and supple spandex. Less sought-after surrounding areas have recently taken to calling themselves "Upper Kits," making a precise definition of Kitsilano's borders problematic. Roughly speaking, Alma Street and Burrard Street form Kitsilano's east and west boundaries, with West 16th Avenue to the south and the ocean to the north.

Shaughnessy Designed in the 1920s as an enclave for Vancouver's budding elite, Shaughnessy for the longest time refused even to admit that it was part of the city of Vancouver. Even today, traffic is carefully diverted away from the area, and it takes a concerted effort to see the stately homes and monstrous mansions, many of which are now featured in film shoots. To find the neighborhood, look on a map for the area of curvy and convoluted streets between Cypress and Oak streets and 12th and 32nd avenues. The center of opulence is the Crescent, an elliptical-shaped street southwest of Granville and 16th Avenue.

Richmond Twenty years ago, Richmond was mostly farmland, with a bit of sleepy suburb. Now it's Asia West, an agglomeration of shopping malls geared to the new—read: rich, educated, and successful—Chinese immigrant. The residential areas of the city are not worth visiting (unless tract homes are your thing), but malls like the Aberdeen Mall or the Yao Han Centre are something else. It's like getting into your car in Vancouver and getting out in Singapore.

Steveston Steveston once existed for nothing but salmon. Located at the southwest corner of Richmond by the mouth of the Fraser River, Steveston was where the boats left to catch the migrating sockeye, returning with loads of fish to be cleaned and canned. In the huge processing plants covering its waterfront, thousands of workers gutted millions of fish. The catch has since declined, and the industry has automated, leaving Steveston a smaller and more pleasant place. The fixed-up waterfront is now an interesting place to stroll. There are public fish sales, a cannery museum, and charter trips up the river or out to the Fraser delta. Above all, there's a laid-back, small-town atmosphere.

Commercial Drive Every immigrant group that ever passed through the city left its mark on the "Drive." First came the

Italians—who left quality espresso—then the Portuguese, the Hondurans and Guatemalans, the leftist alternative vegetarians, the artists, and finally the last wave of immigrants, the yuppies. The result is a peculiar but endearing mix: the Italian cafe next to the Marxist bookstore across from the vegetarian deli that has lately taken to selling really expensive yeast-free Tuscan bread.

Punjabi Market For reasons still unknown, many of the businesses catering to Vancouver's sizable Punjabi population set up shop on a 4-block stretch of Main Street, from 48th up to 52nd Avenue. The area is best seen during business hours, when the fragrant scent of spices wafts from food stalls, and Hindi pop songs blare from hidden speakers. Young brides hunt through sari shops or seek out suitable material in discount textile outlets. Shopping here is like sipping from the distilled essence of the Indian subcontinent.

The North Shore (North Vancouver & West Vancouver) The most impressive thing about the North Shore is its mountain range. Huge, wild, and compellingly beautiful, the mountains are responsible for much of Vancouver's vaunted reputation for physical beauty. They are certainly worth a visit. But the two cities on the North Shore are not without their charms. West Vancouver has the distinction of being the richest city in Canada. That doesn't mean much to visitors, of course, but there are some worthwhile restaurants in the Dundarave area on the West Van waterfront. (Roughly speaking, West Vancouver is everything west of the Lions Gate Bridge.) Better from a visitor's point of view is North Vancouver. It's easily reached by public transit, and the Lonsdale Quay public market—where the SeaBus docks—makes a pleasant afternoon's outing.

2 Getting Around

BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Translink (otherwise known as BC Transit; ✆ **604/521-0400;** www.translink.bc.ca) system includes electric buses, SeaBus catamaran ferries, and the magnetic-rail SkyTrain. It's an ecologically friendly, highly reliable, and inexpensive system that allows you to get everywhere, including the beaches and ski slopes. Regular service runs from 5am to 2am.

Schedules and routes are available at the Travel Info Centres, at many major hotels, online, and on buses. Pick up a copy of *Discover Vancouver on Transit* at one of the Travel Info Centres (see "Visitor

Information" earlier in this chapter). This publication gives transit routes for many city neighborhoods, landmarks, and attractions.

FARES Fares are the same for the buses, SeaBus, and SkyTrain. One-way, all-zone fares are C$2 (US$1.30) after 6:30pm on weekdays and all day on weekends and holidays. At other times, a one-zone fare costs C$2 (US$1.30) and covers the entire city of Vancouver. A two-zone fare—C$3 (US$1.95)—is required to travel to nearby suburbs such as Richmond or North Vancouver, while a three-zone fare—C$4 (US$2.60)—is required for travel to the far-off edge city of Surrey. Free transfers are available on boarding and are good for travel in any direction and for the SkyTrain and SeaBus, but they do have a 90-minute expiration. **DayPasses,** which are good on all public transit, are C$8 (US$5.20) for adults and C$6 (US$3.90) for seniors, students, and children. They can be used for unlimited travel on weekdays or weekends and holidays. Tickets and passes are available at Travel Info Centres, both SeaBus terminals, convenience stores, drugstores, credit unions, and outlets displaying the "FareDealer" symbol and can be bought in advance; most of these outlets also sell a transit map showing all routes for C$1.95 (US$1.25).

BY SKYTRAIN The SkyTrain is a computerized, magnetic-rail train that services 20 stations along its 35-minute trip from downtown Vancouver east to Surrey through Burnaby and New Westminster. An extension, the Millennium line, was scheduled for completion at press time, in the fall of 2002. Not really of interest to most visitors, but those venturing off past Vancouver's Commercial Drive will find new stations at Broadway, Renfrew, and Rupert as well as new stations in New Westminster, towards Coquitlam.

BY SEABUS The SS *Beaver* and SS *Otter* catamaran ferries annually take more than 700,000 passengers, cyclists, and wheelchair riders on a scenic 12-minute commute between downtown's Waterfront Station and North Vancouver's Lonsdale Quay. On weekdays, a SeaBus leaves each stop every 15 minutes from 6:15am to 6:30pm, then every 30 minutes until 1am. SeaBuses depart on Saturdays every half-hour from 6:30am to 12:30pm, then every 15 minutes until 7:15pm, then every-half hour until 1am. On Sundays and holidays, runs depart every half-hour from 8:30am to 11pm. Note that the crossing is a 2-zone fare on weekdays until 6:30pm.

BY BUS Some key routes to keep in mind if you're touring the city by bus: **no. 5** (Robson St.), **no. 2** (Kitsilano Beach to downtown), **no. 50** (Granville Island), **no. 35** or **135** (to the Stanley Park

bus loop), **no. 240** (North Vancouver), **no. 250** (West Vancouver-Horseshoe Bay), and buses **no. 4** and **10** (UBC to Exhibition Park via Granville St. downtown). In the summer, the **Vancouver Parks Board** operates a bus route through Stanley Park. Call ✆ **604/257-8400** for details on the free service or contact ✆ **604/953-3333** for general public transportation information.

BY TAXI

Cab fares start at C$2.30 (US$1.50) and increase at a rate of C$1.25 (US80¢) per kilometer, plus C30¢ (US20¢) per minute at stoplights or in stalled traffic. It's a little less than in most other major cities, but it still adds up. In the downtown area, you can expect to travel for less than C$10 (US$6.50) plus tip. The typical fare for the 13km (8-mile) drive from downtown to the airport is C$25 (US$16).

Taxis are easy to find in front of major hotels, but flagging one can be tricky. Most drivers are usually on radio calls. But thanks to built-in satellite positioning systems, if you call for a taxi, it usually arrives faster than if you go out and hail one. Call for a pickup from **Black Top** (✆ **604/731-1111**), **Yellow Cab** (✆ **604/681-1111**), or **MacLure's** (✆ **604/731-9211**). **LimoJet** (✆ **604/273-1331**) offers flat-rate stretch limousine service to Vancouver Airport (see "By Plane" in section 1).

BY CAR

Vancouver has nowhere near the near-permanent gridlock of northwest cities such as Seattle, but the roads aren't exactly empty either. Fortunately, if you're just sightseeing around town or heading up to Whistler (a car is unnecessary in Whistler), public transit and cabs should see you through. However, if you're planning to visit the North Shore mountains or pursue other out-of-town activities, then by all means rent a car or bring your own. Gas is sold by the liter, averaging around C65¢ (US40¢) per liter. This may seem inexpensive until you consider that a gallon of gas costs about C$2.70 (US$1.75). Also, speeds and distances are posted in kilometers. The speed limit in the city is 50km per hour (30 mph); highway speed limits vary from 90km to 110km per hour (54 mph-66 mph).

RENTALS Rates vary widely depending on demand and style of car. If you're over 25 and have a major credit card, you can rent a vehicle from **Avis,** 757 Hornby St. (✆ **800/879-2847** or 604/606-2847); **Budget,** 501 W. Georgia St. (✆ **800/472-3325,** 800/527-0700, or 604/668-7000); **Enterprise,** 585 Smithe St.

(✆ **800/736-8222** or 604/688-5500); **Hertz Canada,** 1128 Seymour St. (✆ **800/263-0600** or 604/688-2411); **National/Tilden,** 1130 W. Georgia St. (✆ **800/387-4747** or 604/685-6111); or **Thrifty,** 1015 Burrard St. or 1400 Robson St. (✆ **800/847-4389** or 604/606-1666). These firms all have counters and shuttle service at the airport as well. To rent a recreational vehicle, contact Go West Campers, 1577 Lloyd Ave., North Vancouver (✆ **800/661-8813** or 604/987-5288; www.go-west.com).

PARKING All major downtown hotels have guest parking; rates vary from free to C$25 (US$16) per day. There's public parking at **Robson Square** (enter at Smithe and Howe sts.), the **Pacific Centre** (Howe and Dunsmuir sts.), and **The Bay** department store (Richards near Dunsmuir St.). You'll also find larger **parking lots** at the intersections of Thurlow and Georgia, Thurlow and Alberni, and Robson and Seymour streets.

Metered **street parking** isn't impossible to come by, but it may take a trip or three around the block to find a spot. Rules are posted on the street and are strictly enforced. (Drivers are given about a 2-min. grace period before their cars are towed away when the 3pm no-parking rule goes into effect on many major thoroughfares.) Unmetered parking on side streets is often subject to neighborhood residency requirements. Check the signs. If you park in such an area without the appropriate sticker on your windshield, you'll get ticketed, then towed. If your car is towed away or you need a towing service and aren't a CAA or an AAA member, call **Unitow** (✆ **604/251-1255**) or **Busters** (✆ **604/685-8181**).

SPECIAL DRIVING RULES Canadian driving rules are similar to those in the United States. Stopping for pedestrians is required even outside crosswalks. Seat belts are required. Children under 5 must be in child restraints. Motorcyclists must wear helmets. It's legal to turn right at a red light after coming to a full stop unless posted otherwise. Unlike in the United States, however, daytime headlights are mandatory. Though photo radar is no longer used in B.C. (the new government got elected partially on its pledge to eliminate the hated system), photo-monitored intersections are alive and well. If you run through a red light, you may get an expensive picture of your vacation from the police. Fines start at C$100 (US$65).

AUTO CLUB Members of the American Automobile Association (AAA) can get assistance from the **Canadian Automobile Association (CAA),** 999 W. Broadway, Vancouver (✆ **604/268-5600,** or for road service 604/293-2222).

BY BIKE

There are plenty of places to rent a bike along Robson and Denman streets near **Stanley Park** (p. 111). Paved paths crisscross through parks and along beaches (p. 122), and new routes are constantly being added. Helmets are mandatory and riding on sidewalks is illegal except on designated bike paths.

You can take your bike on the SeaBus anytime at no extra charge. Bikes are not allowed in the George Massey Tunnel, but a tunnel shuttle operates four times daily from mid-May to September to transport you across the Fraser River. From May 1 to Victoria Day (the third weekend of May), the service operates on weekends only. All of the West Vancouver blue buses (including the bus to the Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal) can carry two bikes, first-come, first-served, and free of charge. In Vancouver, only a limited number of suburban routes allow bikes on the bus: bus no. 351 to White Rock, bus no. 601 to South Delta, bus no. 404 to the airport, and the 99 Express to UBC.

BY FERRY

Crossing False Creek to Vanier Park or Granville Island on one of the blue miniferries is cheap and fun. The **Aquabus** docks at the foot of Howe Street. It takes you either to Granville Island's public market or east along False Creek to Science World and Stamps Landing. The **Granville Island Ferry** docks at Sunset Beach below the Burrard Street Bridge and the Aquatic Centre. It goes to Granville Island and Vanier Park. Both companies' Granville Island ferries leave every 5 minutes from 7am to 10pm. Granville Island Ferry's boats to Vanier Park leave every 15 minutes from 10am to 8pm, as do the Aquabus ferries to Stamps Landing and Science World. One-way fares for both companies on all routes are $2.50 (US$1.60) for adults and C1.25 (US80¢) for seniors and children.

FAST FACTS: Vancouver

American Express Find the office at 666 Burrard St. (✆ **604/669-2813**). It's open Monday through Friday from 8am to 5:30pm, Saturday from 10am to 4pm.

Area Codes 10-digit dialling in now in effect in all of greater Vancouver. For local calls, dial **604**—the area code for greater Vancouver and Whistler—and then the regular 7-digit number.

Business Hours Vancouver **banks** are open Monday through Thursday from 10am to 5pm and Friday from 10am to 6pm. Some banks, like Canadian Trust, are also open on Saturday. **Stores** are generally open Monday through Saturday from 10am to 6pm. Last call at the city's **restaurant bars** and **cocktail lounges** is 2am.

Child Care If you need cribs, car seats, play pens, or other baby accessories, **Cribs and Carriages** (✆ **604/988-2742**) delivers them right to your hotel.

Consulates The **U.S. Consulate** is at 1095 W. Pender St. (✆ **604/685-4311**). The **British Consulate** is at 800-1111 Melville St. (✆ **604/683-4421**). The **Australian Consulate** is at 1225-888 Dunsmuir St. (✆ **604/684-1177**). Check the Yellow Pages for other countries.

Dentist Most major hotels have a dentist on call. **Vancouver Centre Dental Clinic,** Vancouver Centre Mall, 11-650 W. Georgia St. (✆ **604/682-1601**), is another option. You must make an appointment. The clinic is open Monday through Wednesday 8:30am to 6pm, Thursday 8:30am to 7pm, Friday 9am to 6pm, and Saturday 9am to 4pm.

Doctor Hotels usually have a doctor on call. **Vancouver Medical Clinics,** Bentall Centre, 1055 Dunsmuir St. (✆ **604/683-8138**), is a drop-in clinic open Monday through Friday 8am to 4:45pm. Another drop-in medical center, **Carepoint Medical Centre,** 1175 Denman St. (✆ **604/681-5338**), is open daily from 9am to 9pm. See also "Emergencies," below.

Emergencies Dial ✆ **911** for fire, police, ambulance, and poison control.

Hospitals **St. Paul's Hospital,** 1081 Burrard St. (✆ **604/682-2344**), is the closest facility to downtown and the West End. West Side Vancouver hospitals include **Vancouver General Hospital Health and Sciences Centre,** 855 W. 12th Ave. (✆ **604/875-4111**), and **British Columbia's Children's Hospital,** 4480 Oak St. (✆ **604/875-2345**). In North Vancouver, there's **Lions Gate Hospital,** 231 E. 15th St. (✆ **604/988-3131**).

Hot Lines Emergency numbers include **Crisis Centre** (✆ 604/872-3311), **Rape Crisis Centre** (✆ 604/255-6344), **Rape Relief** (✆ 604/872-8212), **Poison Control Centre** (✆ 604/682-5050), **Crime Stoppers** (✆ 604/669-8477), **SPCA** animal emergency (✆ 604/879-7343), **Vancouver Police** (✆ 604/717-3535), **Fire**

(✆ 604/665-6000), and **Ambulance** (✆ 604/872-5151). See also "Emergencies," above.

Internet Access Free Internet access is available at the Vancouver **public library** Central Branch, 350 W. Georgia St. (✆ **604/331-3600**). Just across the street, **Webster's Internet Cafe,** 340 Robson St. (✆ **604/915-9327**), charges for access but generally has a machine free. Or, for some late night surfing, try **Internet Coffee,** 1104 Davie St. (✆ **604/682-6668**).

Liquor Laws The legal drinking age in British Columbia is 19. Spirits are sold only in government liquor stores, but beer and wine can be purchased from specially licensed, privately owned stores and pubs. LCBC (Liquor Control of British Columbia) stores are open Monday through Saturday from 10am to 6pm, but some are open to 11pm.

Lost Property The **Vancouver Police** have a lost-property room (✆ **604/717-2726**), open 8:30am to 5pm Monday through Saturday. If you think you may have lost something on public transportation, call **Translink** (BC Transit) 8:30am to 5pm at ✆ **604/682-7887.**

Luggage Storage & Lockers Most downtown hotels will gladly hold your luggage before or after your stay. Just ask at the front desk. Lockers are available at the main Vancouver railway station (which is also the main bus depot), **Pacific Central Station,** 1150 Station St., near Main Street and Terminal Avenue south of Chinatown (✆ **604/661-0328**), for C$2 (US$1.30) per day.

Maps See "City Layout," earlier in this chapter.

Newspapers & Magazines The two local papers are the *Vancouver Sun* (www.vancouversun.com), published Monday through Saturday, and *The Province* (www.canada.com/vancouver/theprovince), published Sunday through Friday mornings. The free weekly entertainment paper, *The Georgia Straight,* comes out on Thursday. Other papers are the national *Globe and Mail* and the *National Post,* the *Chinese Oriental Star,* the Southeast Asian *Indo-Canadian Voice,* and the *Jewish Western Daily. Where Vancouver,* a shopping/tourist guide, can be found in your hotel room or at Tourism Vancouver. See "Visitor Information," earlier in this chapter.

Pharmacies **Shopper's Drug Mart,** 1125 Davie St. (✆ **604/685-6445**), is open 24 hours. Several Safeway supermarket

pharmacies are open late; the one on Robson and Denman is open until midnight.

Police For emergencies, dial ✆ **911.** Otherwise, the **Vancouver City Police** can be reached at ✆ **604/717-3535.**

Post Office The **main post office** (✆ **800/267-1177**) is at West Georgia and Homer streets (349 W. Georgia St.). It's open Monday through Friday from 8am to 5:30pm.

Restrooms Hotel lobbies are your best bet for downtown facilities. The shopping centers like Pacific Centre and Sinclair Centre, as well as the large department stores like the Bay, also have restrooms.

Safety Overall, Vancouver is a safe city; violent-crime rates are quite low. However, property crimes and crimes of opportunity (such as items being stolen from unlocked cars) occur disturbingly frequently, particularly downtown. Vancouver's Downtown East Side, between Gastown and Chinatown, is a troubled neighborhood and should be avoided at night.

Taxes Hotel rooms are subject to a 10% tax. The **provincial sales tax (PST)** is 7% (excluding food, restaurant meals, and children's clothing). For specific questions, call the **B.C. Consumer Taxation Branch** (✆ **604/660-4500**).

Most goods and services are subject to a 7% **federal goods and services tax (GST).** Save your receipts. You can get a refund on short-stay accommodations and all shopping purchases. Each purchase must be greater than C$50 (US$33), and you must have a total of at least C$200 (US$130) to file a claim. (This refund doesn't apply to car rentals, parking, restaurant meals, room service, tobacco, or alcohol.) Hotels and the Info Centres can give you application forms, which you then mail to Revenue Canada on your return home. After processing, the government sends a check to your home address. For details on the GST, call ✆ **800/668-4748** in Canada or 902/432-5608 outside Canada, or visit www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca/visitors. PDF files of the refund forms are on the site for you to print out. If you want your refund right away, **Maple Leaf Tax Refund** (✆ **800/993-4313** or 604/893-8478) in the Hotel Vancouver, 900 W. Georgia St., will process your application and provide a refund on the spot, less an 18% processing fee. You have to bring your receipts, two pieces of ID (one of which shows your home address), your plane ticket, and the items you purchased to show to the processing agent.

Telephone Phones in British Columbia are identical to U.S. phones. The country code is the same as the U.S. code (**1**). Local calls normally cost C25¢ (US15¢). Many hotels charge up to C$1 (US65¢) per local call and much more for long-distance calls. You can save considerably by using your calling card. You can also buy prepaid phone cards in various denominations at grocery and convenience stores.

Time Zone Vancouver is in the Pacific time zone, as are Seattle and San Francisco. Daylight saving time applies April through October.

Tipping Tipping etiquette is the same as in the United States: 15% in restaurants, C$1 (US65¢) per bag for bellboys and porters, and C$1 (US65¢) per day for the hotel housekeeper. Taxi drivers get a sliding-scale tip—fares under C$4 (US$2.60) deserve a C$1 (US65¢) tip; for fares over C$5 (US$3.25), tip 15%.

Weather Call ✆ **604/664-9010** or 604/664-9032 for weather updates; dial ✆ **604/666-3655** for marine forecasts. Each local ski resort has its own snow report line. Whistler/Blackcomb's is ✆ **604/687-7507.** Cypress Ski area's is ✆ **604/419-7669.**

3

Where to Stay

The past few years have seen a lot of activity in the Vancouver hotel business. Lots of new rooms have opened up, some in the high end, and a lot more in the moderate-to-budget range. Other hotels have undergone extensive renovations, and good-natured competition has flourished among all the city's hostelries. So no matter what your budget, there's no reason to settle for second best. Most of the hotels are in the downtown area, or in the West End. Both neighborhoods are close to major sights and services. The West Side of Vancouver has a few hotels, plus many pleasant bed-and-breakfasts. Other good accommodations are found across Burrard Inlet on the North Shore.

There are only a few small areas to avoid when booking a room. Granville Street offers location without the price, but the area is a prime hangout for panhandling teenagers. Hotels on E. Hastings Street or E. Cordova Street are not worth the savings. These streets are in Vancouver's East Side skid row, which has some of Canada's highest property-crime rates.

Whichever area you choose, remember that quoted prices don't include the 10% **provincial accommodations tax** or the 7% **goods and services tax (GST).** Non-Canadian residents can get a GST rebate on short-stay accommodations by filling out the Tax Refund Application (see "Taxes" under "Fast Facts: Vancouver," p. 38).

RESERVATIONS Reservations are highly recommended June through September and during holidays. If you arrive without a reservation or have trouble finding a room, call **Super Natural British Columbia's Discover British Columbia** hot line at ✆ **800/663-6000** or **Tourism Vancouver**'s hot line at ✆ **604/683-2000.** Specializing in last-minute bookings, either organization can make arrangements using its large daily listing of hotels, hostels, and B&Bs.

1 Downtown & Yaletown

All downtown hotels are within 5 to 10 minutes' walking distance of shops, restaurants, and attractions. Hotels in this area lean more

toward luxurious than modest, a state of affairs reflected in their prices.

VERY EXPENSIVE

Delta Vancouver Suite Hotel ★ The Delta Vancouver Suite Hotel considers itself a Manhattan-style hotel. The spacious and bright lobby is decorated with black marble, cherry-colored wood, and stone white walls. The indoor atrium extends up to the third floor and connects to Simon Fraser University's conference space in the adjacent building. Suites are designed for business travelers, with a large workspace and amenities usually reserved for business-class rooms, including two phone lines, a speakerphone, and high speed Internet access. The layout of the rooms allows for a lot of natural light and, wherever possible, floor-to-ceiling windows. To upgrade from the standard room to a full one-bedroom suite costs only an additional C$15 (US$9.70). The top three floors are reserved for Signature Club guests. The C$40 (US$26) premium upgrades you to a great view, down duvets, CD players, and access to the Signature Lounge with complimentary breakfast and afternoon cocktails.

550 W. Hastings St., Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L6. ✆ **800/268-1133** or 604/689-8188. Fax 604/605-8881. www.deltahotels.com. 226 units. Oct 16-May C$195-C$270 (US$125-US$174) double. June-Oct 15 C$260-C$340 (US$167-US$219) double. Children under 18 stay free in parents' room. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Valet parking C$15 (US$9.70). **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; indoor pool; health club; concierge; business center; 24-hr. room service; massage; babysitting; laundry service; dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms; executive level rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver ★★ Thanks to a recent C$75-million renovation, the grande dame of Vancouver's hotels has been restored beyond her former glory. A landmark in the city since it first opened its doors in 1939, the hotel has been completely brought up to 21st century standards: the rooms are spacious, with a sitting area, modern lighting, and ample desks; the bathrooms gleam with marble floors and sinks. The decorations evoke an elegance of days gone by. The courtyard suites provide spacious accommodations with a large luxuriously furnished living room, separated from the bedroom with French glass doors. A state-of-the art spa features soothing day packages and a la carte treatments including body scrubs and wraps.

900 W. Georgia St., Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2W6. ✆ **800/866-5577** or 604/684-3131. Fax 604/662-1929. www.fairmont.com. 556 units. High season C$269-C$519 (US$174-US$335) double; C$449-C$599 (US$290-US$386) suite. Low season

Downtown Vancouver Accommodations

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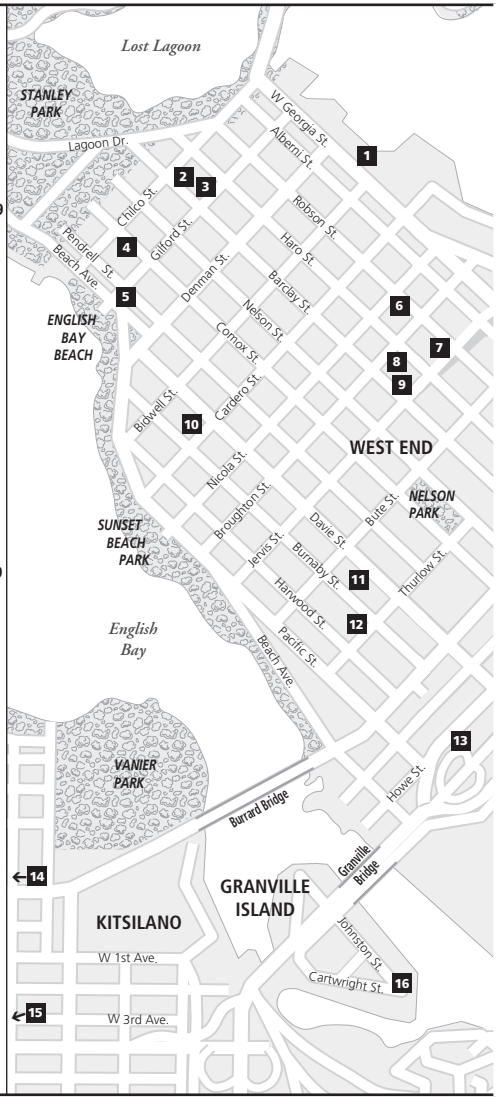

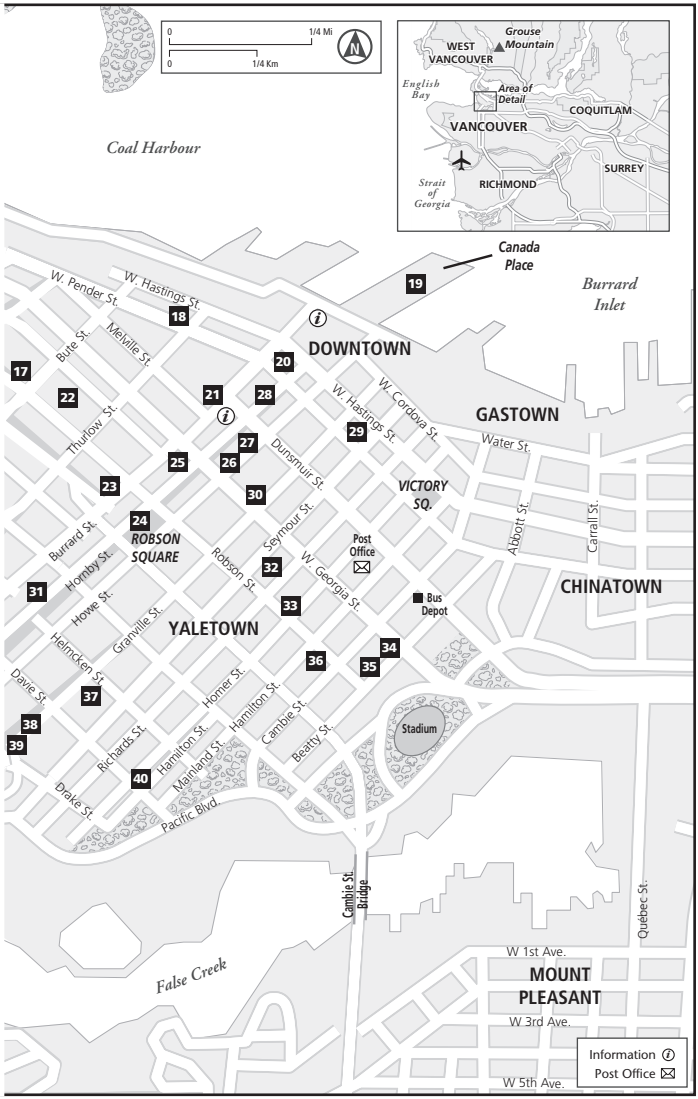
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Melville St.
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Hornby St.
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Seymour St.
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W. Georgia St.
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Bus Depot
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Homer St.
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Richards St.
Mainland St.
Drake St.
Pacific Blvd.
Cambie St. Bridge
Quebec St.
False Creek
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MOUNT PLEASANT
W 3rd Ave.
W 5th Ave.
Information
Post Office

Bed & Breakfast Registries

If you prefer to stay in a B&B, the following agencies specialize in matching guests with establishments that best suit their needs:

- **Born Free Bed & Breakfast of BC,** 4390 Frances St., Burnaby, B.C. V5C ZR3 (✆ **800/488-1941** or 604/298-8815; www.vancouverbandb.bc.ca).
- **Canada-West Accommodations Bed & Breakfast Registry,** P.O. Box 86607, North Vancouver, B.C. V7L 4L2 (✆ **800/561-3223** or 604/990-6730; www.b-b.com).
- **Town and Country Bed & Breakfast,** 2803 W. Fourth Ave. (P.O. Box 74542), Vancouver, B.C. V6K IK2 (✆ and fax **604/731-5942;** www.townandcountrybedandbreakfast.com).

C$189-C$369 (US$122-US$238) double; C$369-C$449 (US$238-US$290) suite. Children under 18 stay free in parents' room. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$19 (US$12). Small pets accepted for a C$25 (US$16) charge. Wheelchair-accessible rooms and rooms for hearing-impaired guests available. **Amenities:** 2 restaurants (brasserie, grill); bar; indoor pool; health club; excellent spa; Jacuzzi; sauna; concierge; tour desk; car rental; business center; shopping arcade; salon; 24-hr. room service; massage; babysitting; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms; Entree Gold concierge level. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

Four Seasons Hotel ★★★ *Kids* It's a magic trick worthy of Doug Henning: In the heart of downtown, the 28-story Four Seasons just seems to disappear. Thanks to the camouflage by the Pacific Centre Mall and the surrounding office towers, most people walk right by without ever noticing its existence. But like any good magic trick, it's just illusion. Once inside there is nothing nondescript about the place; the elegant lobby opens up into a spacious garden terrace, the sunlight pouring in through skylights overhead. The guest rooms are tastefully appointed with French provincial furniture and marble bathrooms, while the high ceilings add a spacious feel. Higher floors provide glimpses of the mountains or the city. For a slightly larger room, reserve a deluxe corner room with wraparound floor-to-ceiling windows.

791 W. Georgia St., Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2T4. ✆ **800/332-3442** in the U.S., or 604/689-9333. Fax 604/684-4555. www.fourseasons.com. 385 units. C$400-C$525 (US$258-US$339) double; C$445-C$475 (US$287-US$306) junior suite; C$375-C$570 (US$242-US$367) executive suite. Wheelchair-accessible units available. AE, DC, MC, V. Parking C$20 (US$13). Pets accepted. **Amenities:** 2 restaurants; bar;

indoor and heated outdoor pool; outstanding exercise room; sauna; concierge; car rental; business center; shopping arcade; 24-hr. room service; massage; babysitting; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV/VCR, dataport (high speed and wireless Internet), minibar, hair dryer, iron, safe.

Georgian Court Hotel ★★ *Finds* This modern, 14-story brick hotel is extremely well located—it's a block or two from B.C. Place Stadium, GM Place Stadium, the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, the Playhouse, and the Vancouver Public Library, making it ideal for sports fans, trade-show attendees, and culture vultures. The guest rooms are large and attractively decorated. And while the big-time celebs are usually whisked off to the glamorous top hotels, their entourages often stay at the Georgian Court, as it provides all the amenities and business-friendly extras such as three phones in every room, brightly lit desks, and complimentary high-speed Internet access without the heavy price tag.

773 Beatty St., Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2M4. ✆ **800/663-1155** or 604/682-5555. Fax 604/682-8830. www.georgiancourt.com. 180 units. May 1-Oct 15 C$210-C$275 (US$135-US$177) double. Oct 16-Apr 30 C$125-C$215 (US$81-US$139) double. AE, DC, MC, V. Parking C$8 (US$5). **Amenities:** Restaurant (Swiss); bar; health club; Jacuzzi; sauna; concierge; business center; limited room service; babysitting; laundry service; dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV, dataport, minibar, hair dryer, iron.

Le Soleil Hotel & Suites ★ Stepping into Le Soleil is like entering a European luxury hotel. The uniformed doorman welcomes you into a lobby decorated with crystal chandeliers, Italian marble, plush carpeting, and gilded, vaulted ceilings. The opulence of the hotel can get a bit overwhelming in the narrow guest hallways, but it comes off about right in the suites (all units except 10 doubles are suites). Interiors are furnished with maple-finished Biedermeier-style furniture. The sitting areas are comfortable; the sofas convert into beds. As you would expect, all the little touches are there—the fruit plate upon check-in, the turndown service with Godiva chocolates. Because the hotel is right downtown, nearly all suites feature skyline views. However, for the best views, not to mention ultimate luxury, the Penthouse suites will not disappoint. The Versace-inspired bedroom-and-den Penthouse has a Jacuzzi tub in the living room and 18-foot floor-to-ceiling windows.

567 Hornby St., Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2E8. ✆ **877/632-3030** or 604/632-3000. Fax 604/632-3001. www.lesoleilhotel.com. 119 units. May 1-Oct 15 C$400 (US$258) double; C$430 (US$277) suite; C$1,500 (US$968) penthouse. Oct 16-Apr 30 $300 (US$194) double; C$330 (US$213) suite; C$1,000 (US$645) penthouse. AE, DC, MC, V. Valet parking C$20 (US$13). Pets accepted, C$150 (US$97). **Amenities:** Restaurant (Italian); access to YWCA fitness facilities next door (C$11/US$7 per

day); concierge; business center; 24-hr. room service; laundry service; same-dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

Metropolitan Hotel Vancouver ★★ The luxurious Metropolitan is centrally situated between the financial district and downtown shopping areas and caters to business travelers on weekdays. A very clever design in the feng shui tradition has rendered the tiny lobby quite elegant—it's furnished with overstuffed armchairs and dominated by a huge, hand-carved, gilded Chinese screen. Most units in the 18-story hotel have small balconies. All rooms have stately dark-wood furnishings, queen-size beds with Italian linens, marble bathrooms, fluffy bathrobes, and morning paper delivery.

645 Howe St., Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2Y9. ✆ **800/667-2300** or 604/687-1122. Fax 604/643-7267. www.metropolitan.com. 197 units. Nov-March C$209-C$299 (US$135-US$193) double. Apr-Oct C$229-C$385 (US$148-US$248) double. Children under 18 stay free in parents' room. Pets are accepted. AE, DC, MC, V. Underground valet parking C$23 (US$15) per day. **Amenities:** Restaurant (see Diva at the Met, p. 67); bar; indoor pool; squash courts; health club; concierge; business center; 24-hr. room service; in-room massage; babysitting; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, iron, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, safe.

Opus Hotel ★★ Are you a bit of a *Susan*—that's a Canadian fashionista who loves bright colors and Armani accessories? Or maybe you are more like *Mike*—a New Yorker with a penchant for sleek design and minimalist stainless steel? In the brand new Opus Hotel in Yaletown, each room is furnished according to one of five personalities, each with its own style, color, and flavor. From the outside, the seven-story brick building looks like any other Yaletown warehouse, but inside, designers have made liberal use of bold colors and interesting textures (fabric walls, mosaic covered pillars, colored marble floors) to create a unique boutique hotel. And nothing is missing in the guest rooms, either: Each room has a great bed (think firm mattress with top-quality linens), a CD player, lots of natural light (with huge windows that open), a large desk, spacious vanity, and a bathroom to die for. A number of the suites also come with a fireplace, wet bar, soaker tub for two, patio, and flat-screen TV. For the best views book one of the south facing rooms looking out towards False Creek.

322 Davie St., Vancouver, B.C. V6B 5Z6. ✆ **866/642-6787** or 604/642-6787. Fax 604/642-6780. www.opushotel.com. 96 units. Nov-Apr C$209-C$299 (US$134-US$193) double; suite C$325 (US$210). May-Oct C$289-C$379 (US$186-US$245) double; suite C$405 (US$261). Children 17 and under stay free in parents' room. Pets accepted. **Note:** Check website for updated rates for summer 2003 as well as

special packages. AE, DC, MC, V. Valet parking C$20 (US$13). **Amenities:** Restaurant (French brasserie); bar; cardio room; concierge; 24-hr. room service; laundry service; dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

Pan Pacific Hotel Vancouver ★★ Since its completion in 1986, this 23-story luxury hotel atop the Vancouver Convention Centre has become perhaps the key landmark on the Vancouver waterfront; Canada Place, with its distinctive five white sails, and the cruise-ship terminal are at your door step. If you're taking an Alaskan cruise, this is the place to stay. Guests rooms begin on the ninth floor, above a huge glass atrium of a lobby that seems to invite the mountains and the harbor right in. Superior rooms face the city and offer a partial waterfront view. For the best views, book a deluxe room (for surcharge of about C$30/US$20), and you can wake to see the sun glinting on the mountains of the North Shore and the floatplanes drifting in with a morning tide of commuters from parts west and north. All rooms are very spacious, with a wide hallway entrance, large closet, and elegant maple furniture. Huge picture windows add to the brightness. Bathrooms are luxurious and particularly spacious. The hotel boasts an outstanding health club (C$15/US$10 daily fee), with classes, cardio room, universal gym, small inside track, and squash courts.

300-999 Canada Place, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 3B5. ✆ **800/937-1515** in the U.S., or 604/662-8111. Fax 604/685-8690. www.panpacific.com. 504 units. May-Oct C$490-C$590 (US$316-US$381) double. Nov-Apr C$390-C$450 (US$252-US$290) double. C$650-C$3,800 (US$419-US$2,452) suite year-round. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$21 (US$14). **Amenities:** 3 restaurants; bar; outdoor heated pool; squash courts; health club; spa; Jacuzzi; sauna; concierge; tour desk; car rental; business center; shopping arcade; 24-hr. room service; massage; babysitting; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking floors. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport and high speed Internet, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre Hotel ★★★ The tallest—and at 735 rooms the largest—hotel in the city, the Wall Centre is hard to miss. Look for the towering two-tone oval spire, the result of a strange compromise between city hall—which wanted the tower to have clear glass—and the developer, who preferred his glass aviator-shades black. Completed in May 2001, the Wall Centre is development mogul Peter Wall's personal tribute to his favorite details in the world's finest accommodations. From the lobby's gold-leaf staircase, custom-designed furniture, and hand-blown glass chandeliers, to the half-dozen peepholes on each guest room door, the opulent decor would not look out of place in a modern-art gallery. All guest rooms—each with stunning floor-to-ceiling

windows—are elegantly appointed with blond-wood furnishings, luxury bathrooms, heated floors, and king-size or double beds.

1088 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2R9. ✆ **800/325-3535** or 604/331-1000. Fax 604/331-1000. www.sheratonvancouver.com. 733 units. Oct 23-May 14 C$129-C$249 (US$83-US$161) double; C$179-C$399 (US$115-US$257) suite. May 15-Oct 22 C$199-C$409 (US$128-US$264) double; C$249-C$549 (US$161-US$354) suite. Crystal Club upgrade C$25-C$40 (US$16-US$26). AE, DC, MC, V. Valet parking C$19 (US$12). **Amenities:** 2 restaurants (bistro, continental); 2 bars; indoor pool; state-of-the-art health club; spa; Jacuzzi; sauna; concierge; tour desk; car-rental desk; business center; salon; 24-hr. room service; babysitting; same-day laundry and dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms; executive level rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, high-speed Internet access, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

The Sutton Place Hotel ★★ Don't let the big pink hospital-like exterior fool you. Once you enter the lobby of this centrally located hotel, it's pure luxury. The grand lobby is elegantly decorated with beige marble, fresh flowers, chandeliers, and European artwork. All standard rooms are tastefully decorated in a classic European style. The one- or two-bedroom junior suites have a small parlor. In larger suites, double French doors separate the bedroom from the large sitting area.

Your four-legged friend can also receive grand treatment at the Sutton Place: For C$95 (US$61), you can purchase the VIP program, which comes with a gourmet dinner (T-bone or fresh tuna) and turndown service with doggie treats.

845 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2K6. ✆ **800/961-7555** or 604/682-5511. Fax 604/682-5513. www.suttonplace.com. 397 units. Nov-Apr C$169-C$299 (US$109-$193) double; C$239-C$1,200 (US$154-US$774) suite. May-Oct C$239-C$450 (US$154-US$290) double; C$339-C$1,700 (US$219-US$1,097) suite. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Underground self- or valet parking C$17 (US$11). Bus: 22. **Amenities:** Restaurant (French); lounge (with bistro fare); indoor pool; health club; spa; Jacuzzi; sauna; complimentary bikes; children's program; concierge; business center; 24-hr. room service; laundry service; same-day dry-cleaning service; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport and high-speed Internet, minibar, hair dryer, iron, safe.

Wedgewood Hotel ★★★ The only boutique hotel in downtown Vancouver, the Wedgewood offers elegant accommodations and fine amenities. A popular place with visiting movie stars (Goldie Hawn practically lived here while house-hunting in Vancouver), its staff truly know how to pamper their guests. All 89 units are spacious and have balconies; the best views are those facing the Vancouver Art Gallery and Law court, avoid the rooms that look out over the back of the hotel. Furnishings are in elegant blues and gold tones and the artwork in each room is original. Business travelers will appreciate the ample workspace, high-speed Internet

access, and dual phone line. The one-bedroom suites are beautifully appointed and sleep four comfortably. To really stretch out, however, consider the penthouse suite on the 12th floor overlooking the Law Courts. This large suite comes with a fireplace, a large patio, and a dream-come-true master bedroom with a heart-shaped bed. Good thing the hotel's fine Bacchus restaurant offers room service.

845 Hornby St., Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1V1. ✆ **800/663-0666** or 604/689-7777. Fax 604/608-5349. www.wedgewoodhotel.com. 89 units. May-Sept C$220-C$380 (US$142-US$245) double; C$480 (US$310) suite C$680 (US$439) penthouse. Oct-Apr C$160-C$280 (US$103-US$181) double; C$380 (US$245) suite. Year round C$448-$700 (US$380-$450) penthouse. AE, DC, MC, V. Valet parking C$15 (US$10). **Amenities:** Restaurant (French); small weight room; sauna; concierge; business center; 24-hr. room service; laundry service; dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms; executive rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, VCR, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

The Westin Grand ★★★ Just across from the public library, the Westin Grand offers high-end all-suite accommodations that are within easy walking distance of Yaletown, GM Place, and the Robson shopping area. The spacious suites are brightened by the natural light pouring in through the floor-to-ceiling windows—a nice foil to the somber mahogany furniture and earth-toned decor. Sitting rooms come with a kitchenette tucked away behind the blond-wood cabinet doors, and bedrooms have either queen or king beds. Business travelers can reserve the Westin's Guest Office, set up with a fax, printer, and in-room photocopier. Rooms for travelers with disabilities are available.

433 Robson St., Vancouver, B.C. V6B 6L9. ✆ **888/680-9393** or 604/602-1999. Fax 604/647-2502. www.westingrandvancouver.com. 207 suites. May-Sept C$189-C$429 (US$122-US$277) suite. Oct-Apr C$158-C$329 (US$102-US$212) suite. Up to 2 children under 17 stay free in parents' room. Additional person C$25 (US$16) extra. Pets accepted, C$50 (US$32) deposit. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Self-parking C$15 (US$10); valet parking C$19 (US$13). **Amenities:** Restaurant (West Coast); outdoor pool; excellent health club; Jacuzzi; sauna; children's program; concierge; business center; 24-hr. room service; in-room massage; babysitting; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms; executive rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, kitchenette, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

MODERATE

Best Western Downtown Vancouver The 12-story Best Western is just a 5-block walk from the theater area on Granville Street at the south end of downtown. All rooms are comfortable, and some rooms have harbor views. The corner rooms are a bit smaller than the rest, but they do have more light. This hotel is not overflowing with facilities, but the rooms are well furnished and the

location is convenient. Accommodations with a full kitchen are available for an additional C$20 to C$25 (US$13-US$16).

718 Drake St. (at Granville St.), Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2W6. ✆ **888/669-9888** or 604/669-9888. Fax 604/669-3440. www.bestwesterndowntown.com. 143 units; 32 with full kitchen. C$139-C$209 (US$90-US$135) double; C$280-C$350 (US$181-US$226) penthouse. Rates include deluxe continental breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$5 (US$3.25). **Amenities:** Restaurant; rooftop exercise room; Jacuzzi; sauna; game room; tour desk; shuttle service to downtown; babysitting; laundry service; nonsmoking rooms; corporate rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV/VCR, dataport, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

Days Inn Downtown Situated in a heritage building dating back to 1910, Days Inn Downtown provides a central location for exploring Vancouver. The building is well maintained—all the rooms were refurbished in 1998, and the lobby underwent complete renovations in 1999. For travelers who don't need all the amenities of a large hotel, these rooms are comfortable and simply furnished. Ten of the rooms have showers only. Request a water view or consider a harbor-facing suite; rooms facing east stare directly at the concrete walls of the building next door.

921 W. Pender St., Vancouver, B.C. V6C 1M2. ✆ **800/329-7466** or 604/681-4335. Fax 604/681-7808. www.daysinnvancouver.com. 85 units (10 with shower only). May-Oct C$149-C$189 (US$96-US$122) double; C$209 (US$135) suite. Nov-Apr C$105-C$125 (US$68-US$81) double; C$155 (US$100) suite. AE, DC, V. Valet parking C$10 (US$6.45). **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; concierge; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV, dataport, fridge, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

Quality Hotel Downtown/The Inn at False Creek *Kids* The Tex-Mex theme may seem out of place in Vancouver, but it works. The Inn at False Creek is a boutique hotel decorated with Mexican art, pottery, and rugs, in a kind of Santa Fe style. Room decor consists of dark green, terra-cotta, and earth tones, and brick for a touch of authenticity. The spacious suites are great for families—15 have full kitchens, and a number of others have glassed-in balconies, which double as enclosed play areas (the hotel staff keeps a supply of board games and puzzles behind the front desk). Rooms on the back side are preferable because the hotel is situated beside the Granville Bridge on-ramp. The traffic noise is minimized in the front, however, by double-pane windows and black-out curtains. In the low season, the hotel's "City Passport" entitles guests to two-for-one discounts at numerous attractions, theaters, and restaurants.

1335 Howe St. (at Drake St.), Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1R7. ✆ **800/663-8474** or 604/682-0229. Fax 604/662-7566. www.qualityhotel.ca. 157 units. May-Sept. C$159 (US$103) double; C$189-C$209 (US$122-US$135) suite. Oct-Apr C$89

(US$57) double; C$109 (US$70) suite. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$8 (US$5) **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; outdoor pool; access to nearby health club; Jacuzzi; sauna; concierge; tour desk; car rental; limited room service; babysitting; dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms; executive-level rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV, dataport, coffeemaker, hairdryer, iron, safe, no phone.

Rosedale on Robson Suite Hotel ★★ *Kids* Located directly across the street from Library Square, the Rosedale provides excellent value for the money, particularly when it comes to amenities. All rooms are one- or two-bedroom suites and feature separate living rooms with a pullout couch and full kitchenettes. Very family friendly, the Rosedale offers designated two-bedroom family suites: the kids' bedrooms are furnished with bunk beds and contain a large toy chest. On Saturday night, the Rosedale staff host a movie or craft night to take the little ones off their parents' hands for a while.

838 Hamilton (at Robson St.), Vancouver, B.C. V6B 6A2. ✆ **800/661-8870** or 604/689-8033. Fax 604/689-4426. www.rosedaleonrobson.com. 275 units. May-Sept C$205-C$285 (US$132-US$184) suite. Oct-Apr C$125-C$185 (US$81-US$119) suite. Additional adult C$20 (US$13). Rates include continental breakfast. Pets accepted, C$10 (US$6.45) per day. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$8 (US$5). **Amenities:** Restaurant (NY deli); indoor lap pool; exercise room; Jacuzzi; sauna; steam room; concierge; children's programs; tour desk; car-rental desk; business center; limited room service; massage; babysitting; laundry service; dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms; executive-level rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, fax, dataport, kitchen, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

INEXPENSIVE

Howard Johnson Hotel *Finds* Yet another sign of south Granville's rapid gentrification, this formerly down-at-the-heels hotel was bought, gutted, renovated, and reopened in 1998 with an eye to the budget-conscious traveler. Hallways are decorated with photographs of Vancouver's early days, while the rooms themselves are comfortably if simply furnished. The suites have kitchenettes and sofa beds, convenient for families.

1176 Granville St., Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1L8. ✆ **888/654-6336** or 604/688-8701. Fax 604/688-8335. www.hojovancouver.com. May 1-Oct 15 C$129-C$149 (US$83-US$96) double; C$149-C$169 (US$96-US$109) suite. Oct 16-Apr 30 C$69-C$89 (US$45-US$57) double; C$99-C$119 (US$64-US$77) suite. Children under 17 stay free in parents' room. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, MC, V. Parking C$8 (US$5). **Amenities:** Restaurant (Italian); bar; access to nearby health club; concierge; tour desk; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

The Kingston Hotel *Value* An affordable downtown hotel is a rarity for Vancouver; but if you can do without the frills, the

Kingston offers a clean, comfortable place to sleep and a complimentary continental breakfast to start your day. Called a European-style hotel, it is indeed reminiscent of the small Parisian or Roman pensiones: no elevators, tiny rooms, and just 9 of the 55 rooms have private bathrooms and TVs. The rest have hand basins and the use of shared showers and toilets on each floor. Still, you will not find a cheaper option so close to all the downtown action.

757 Richards St., Vancouver, B.C. V6B 3A6. ✆ **888/713-3304** or 604/684-9024. Fax 604/684-9917. www.kingstonhotelvancouver.com. 55 units, 9 with private bathroom. C$58-C$115 (US$37-US$74) double. Extra person C$10 (US$6.45). Rates include continental breakfast. AE, MC, V. Parking C$10 (US$6.45) per day, ½ block away. **Amenities:** Sauna; coin-operated laundry; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* TV (in units with private bathrooms).

Ramada Inn and Suites *Finds* The Ramada was recently converted from a rooming house into a tourist hotel. The bright lobby and the guest rooms are all decorated in an Art Deco theme. The rooms are pleasant, with dark-wood furniture and small desks; everything is very new. Suites feature a sofa bed, kitchenette, and small dining area, making them very attractive for families. The location is convenient for exploring downtown and Yaletown, as well as hopping over to Granville Island or Kitsilano.

1221 Granville St., Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1M6. ✆ **888/835-0078** or 604/685-1111. Fax 604/685-0707. www.ramadavancouver.com. 116 units. May-Sept C$99-C$169 (US$64-US$109) double; Oct-Apr C$69-C$99 (US$45-US$64) double; suites C$20-C$40 (US$13-US$26) more than a standard room. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Valet parking C$10 (US$6.45). Pets accepted, C$20 (US$13) per night. **Amenities:** Restaurant (Irish); bar/lounge; laundry service; tour desk. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, kitchenette (in suites), coffeemaker, hair dryer.

YWCA Hotel/Residence ★★ *Value* Built in 1995, this attractive 12-story residence is next door to the Georgian Court Hotel. It's an excellent choice for travelers (male or female) as well as families with limited budgets. Bedrooms are simply furnished; some have TVs. There are quite a few reasonably priced restaurants nearby (but none in-house). Three communal kitchens are available for guests' use and all guest rooms have mini-fridges. (There are a number of small grocery stores nearby, as well as the Save-On Foods Supermarket, a 10-min. walk west on Davie St.) There also are three TV lounges and free access to the best gym in town at the nearby co-ed YWCA Fitness Centre.

733 Beatty St., Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2M4. ✆ **800/663-1424** or 604/895-5830. Fax 604/681-2550. www.ywcahotel.com. 155 units, 53 with private bathroom. C$54-C$86 (US$35-US$55) double with shared bathroom, C$74-C$132 (US$48-US$85) double with private bathroom. Additional person C$5 (US$3.20). Weekly, monthly,

group, and off-season discounts available. AE, MC, V. Parking C$6 (US$4) per day. **Amenities:** Access to YWCA facility; coin-operated laundry; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV in some rooms, dataport, fridge, hair dryer.

2 The West End

About a 10-minute walk from the downtown area, the West End's hotels are nestled amid the tree-lined residential streets bordering Stanley Park, within close proximity to Robson Street's many shops, restaurants, and attractions, as well as the surrounding beaches. Though there are fewer hotels here than downtown, the choices are more diverse.

EXPENSIVE

Delta Pinnacle ★★ Open since 2000, the Delta Pinnacle still hasn't lost its "new hotel" smell; everything gleams and glows and is in top-notch shape. Located just between the West End and Coal Harbour, the hotel is close to Stanley Park, the waterfront, the cruise-ship terminal, and trendy Robson Street. All guest rooms have either two double beds or a king-size bed. Most bathrooms are large with a separate shower and tub combination and done up in beautiful marble. Oversize windows let in lots of light and the rooms above the 15th floor provide good city or mountain views. If you can, score one of the -19 rooms (2019, 2119, 2219 . . .); these oval-shaped units max out the window space and offer endless views, plus they're the largest rooms. The Signature rooms are worth the extra C$30 (US$19), but mostly for the access to the club lounge on the 25th floor with fantastic views of the mountains. Breakfast and hors d'oeuvres are served daily for Signature guests.

1128 West Hastings St., Vancouver B.C., V6E 4R5. ✆ **800/268-1133** or 604/684-1128. Fax 604/298-1128. www.deltahotels.com. 434 units. June 1-Oct 14 C$219-C$329 (US$141-US$212) double. Oct 15-May 31 C$159-C$249 (US$103-US$161) double. Children 18 and under stay free in parents' room. AE, DC, MC, V. Self-parking C$16 (US$10) per day; valet parking C$21 (US$14) per day. Skytrain to Burrard Station. **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; indoor lap pool; health club; Jacuzzi; sauna; concierge; business center; 24-hr. room service; laundry; same-day dry cleaning service; nonsmoking rooms; executive-level rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV/pay movies, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, safe.

Listel Vancouver ★★ *Finds* This hotel has always had a killer location—right at the western end of the Robson Street shopping strip. Recently, the owners have been putting a lot of effort—and money—into making the interior match the address. Rooms now feature top-quality bedding and cherrywood furnishings, including

cozy little window banquettes. Particularly noteworthy are the Gallery Rooms on the top two floors. Each of these rooms and suites is like a private gallery, hung with original artworks from the Buschlen Mowatt Gallery, one of the city's leading private art dealers. On a more practical note, these rooms feature upgraded amenities and better views. The upper-floor rooms facing Robson Street, with glimpses of the harbor and the mountains beyond, are worth the price. (The others face the alley and nearby apartment buildings.) Soundproof windows eliminate traffic noise, which can be pretty loud on summer weekends.

1300 Robson St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1C5. ✆ **800/663-5491** or 604/684-8461. Fax 604/684-8326. www.listel-vancouver.com. 130 units. May-Sept C$260 (US$168) standard double; C$320 (US$206) gallery room double; C$600 (US$387) suite. Oct-Apr C$220 (US$142) standard double; C$260 (US$168) gallery room double; C$350 (US$226) suite. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$14 (US$9). **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; exercise room; limited room service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms; concierge-level rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV, dataport, iron, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer.

Pacific Palisades Hotel ★★★ *Finds* Walk into the Pacific Palisades lobby and you know right away that this is not just another standard-issue hotel. Bold and bright colors, whimsically shaped glass chandeliers, and a sleek metal fireplace give the hotel a contemporary modern look. Watch your step for Pal the robotic dog who likes to sniff out newcomers by the check-in desk.

Guest rooms are spread out over two towers, both of which have recently undergone extensive renovations; the revamped rooms are fabulous. All rooms have kitchenettes (everything but the stove) and are decorated in funky apple greens and lemon yellows with a splash of blue or red, an interesting counterpoint to the modern blond-wood furniture. The rooms are spacious with large wall-to-wall windows. Even bigger are the one-bedroom suites, which boast large living/dining rooms. All suites have balconies and can easily accommodate four adults. A couple of other perks that make this hotel a worthwhile choice are the complimentary afternoon wine tasting and the best minibar items in town (everyone's a sucker for animal crackers and licorice).

1277 Robson St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1C4. ✆ **800/663-1815** or 604/688-0461. Fax 604/688-4374. www.pacificpalisadeshotel.com. 233 units. May 1-Oct 15 C$245 (US$158) double; C$275 (US$177) suite. Oct 16-Apr 30 C$185 (US$120) double; C$275 (US$177) suite. Full kitchens C$30 (US$19) extra. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$22 (US$14). **Amenities:** Restaurant (see Zin's, p. 82); bar; indoor lap pool; basketball court; excellent health club; spa services; Jacuzzi; sauna; bike rentals; concierge; tour desk; business center; 24-hr. room service; massage;

babysitting; coin laundry and laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV, dataport, kitchenette, minibar, fridge, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

Westin Bayshore Resort & Marina ★★★ *Kids* Thanks to a C$55-million renovation, this venerable resort hotel looks better than ever. The lobby has been completely redesigned to show off the surrounding park and mountains; achieving much the same thing are two new restaurants and a coffee bar, with two outdoor decks overlooking the harbor. Perched on the water's edge overlooking Stanley Park's eastern entrance, the Bayshore is still just a short stroll along the seawall from the Canada Place Pier and downtown, and the neighborhood just keeps getting better. Rooms in the original 1961 building have been completely refurbished with classic-looking decor and modern gadgets such as high-speed Internet, two phone lines, and comfortable lighting. In the newer tower, the rooms are spacious and bright; all come with balconies and large windows. Both towers offer unobstructed views of the harbor's dazzling array of sailboats, luxury yachts, and floatplanes. This family-friendly hotel provides children with their own welcome package upon check-in and organizes Super Saturdays, a behind-the-scenes tour of the hotel's operations and movie night for the young ones, giving the parents the night off.

1601 Bayshore Dr., Vancouver, B.C. V6G 2V4. ✆ **800/228-3000** or 604/682-3377. Fax 604/687-3102. www.westinbayshore.com. 510 units. Mid-Apr to Oct C$289 (US$186) double; C$450-C$700 (US$290-US$452) suite. Nov to mid-Apr C$195 (US$126) double; C$370-C$420 (US$239-US$271) suite. Children under 19 stay free in parents' room. AE, DC, MC, V. Self-parking C$18 (US$12); valet parking C$19 (US$12). **Amenities:** 2 restaurants; bar; indoor and magnificent outdoor pool with mountain view; health club; Jacuzzi; sauna; watersports rental; children's programs; concierge; tour desk; car rental; business center; shopping arcade; 24-hr. room service; massage; babysitting; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

MODERATE

Barclay House in the West End ★★ *Finds* The Barclay House, located on one of the West End's quiet maple-lined streets just a block from the historic Barclay Square, opened as a bed-and-breakfast in 1999. Built in 1904 by a local developer, this beautiful house can be a destination on its own. The elegant parlors and dining rooms are perfect for lounging on a rainy afternoon or sipping a glass of complimentary sherry before venturing out for dinner in the trendy West End. On a summer day, the front porch with its comfortable chairs makes for a cozy place to read. All rooms are

beautifully furnished in Victorian style; a number of the pieces are family heirlooms. Modern conveniences such as CD players, TV/VCRs, and luxurious bathrooms blend in perfectly. The Penthouse offers skylights, a fireplace, and romantic claw-foot tub; the South Room contains a queen-size brass bed and an elegant sitting room.

1351 Barclay St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1H6. ✆ **800/971-1351** or 604/605-1351. Fax 604/605-1382. www.barclayhouse.com. 5 units. C$145-C$225 (US$93-US$145) double. MC, V. Free parking. **Amenities:** Access to nearby fitness center; massage; concierge; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* TV/VCR w/pay movies, extensive video library, fridge, iron, hair dryer.

Blue Horizon ★ *Finds* This unmistakable, blue-tiled, 1960s high-rise on Robson Street capitalizes on one of Vancouver's best assets—the view. The small lobby features a tall glass sculpture entitled *Water and Air*, and the theme has been carried throughout the restaurant and lounge on the ground floor. Upstairs, the rooms are spacious—every room is a corner room, which maximizes light and window space. In 2000 the hotel renovated all its guest rooms, giving them a clean, contemporary look. The best views are on the 15th floor and higher. All feature sizable sitting areas, and, of course, balconies.

1225 Robson St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1C5. ✆ **800/663-1333** or 604/688-1411. Fax 604/688-4461. www.bluehorizonhotel.com. 214 units. C$89-C$199 (US$57-US$128) double; C$127-C$279 (US$82-US$180) suite. Children under 16 stay free in parents' room. Extra person C$15 (US$10). AE, DC, MC, V. Self-parking C$9 (US$6). **Amenities:** Restaurant; indoor pool; exercise room; Jacuzzi; sauna; concierge; tour desk; babysitting; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, dataport, iron, minibar, fridge, coffeemaker, hair dryer, safe.

Coast Plaza Suite Hotel at Stanley Park Built originally as an apartment building, this 35-story hotel above the Denman Place Mall attracts a wide variety of guests, from business travelers and bus tours to film and TV actors. They come for the large rooms, affordable one- or two-bedroom suites, and amazing views of English Bay. Undoubtedly the best room, the two-bedroom corner suite is bigger than most people's West End apartments and boasts a spectacular view of the ocean. Don't even think of booking these during the Fireworks (see HSBC Power Smart Celebration of Light, p. 9), unless it's for 2008 maybe? The one-bedroom suites and standard rooms are still very spacious, all with floor-to-ceiling windows and a balcony; about half the units have full kitchens. Furnishings are plain and comfortable, if a little dated, but the hotel is working on an upgrade.

1763 Comox St., Vancouver, B.C. V6G 1P6. ✆ **800/663-1144** or 604/688-7711. Fax 604/688-5934. www.coasthotels.com. 267 units. C$129-C$199 (US$83-US$128) double; C$155-C$290 (US$100-US$187) suite. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$8 (US$5.20). Pets accepted. **Amenities:** 2 restaurants; bar; indoor pool; access to Denman Fitness Centre in mall below; Jacuzzi; sauna; concierge; tour desk; downtown shuttle service; business center; shopping arcade; 24-hr. room service; babysitting; coin laundry; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV, dataport, iron, minibar, fridge, coffeemaker, hair dryer.

Parkhill Hotel *Value* A favorite among Asian tourists, the 24-story Parkhill offers an affordable alternative for those wishing to stay in the West End. Located in the heart of Davie Street, its guests are within walking distance of dozens of restaurants, nightlife, shopping, and the beach. Not particularly luxurious, this hotel offers comfortable and spotless accommodations. Formerly an apartment building, the studios have been converted into hotel rooms, resulting in very spacious units with lots of closet space; all have balconies. Except for the corner suites, which feature a king-size bed and pullout couch, all rooms are identical; you just pay more according to the view. For the best views reserve a deluxe room (20th-23rd floors) facing north or west, catching both the mountains and English Bay. Located on floors 14 through 19 are Superior rooms with still excellent views; standard units are on floors 4 through 13.

1160 Davie St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1N1. ✆ **800/663-1525** or 604/685-1311. Fax 604/681-0208. www.parkhillhotel.com. 192 units. May 16-Sept 30 C$185-C$220 (US$119-US$142) double. Oct 1-May 15 C$109-C$139 (US$70-US$90) double. AE, DC, MC, V. Parking C$10 (US$6.45). **Amenities:** 2 restaurants; bar; heated outdoor pool; small exercise room; concierge; tour desk; business center; limited room service; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV, dataport, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

The Rosellen Suites at Stanley Park ★★ *Kids* Staying at the Rosellen is like having your own apartment in the West End. Stanley Park and the seawall are within a few blocks and busy Denman Street with its many restaurants and shops is just 3 blocks east. Converted into a hotel to meet the demand for rooms during the 1986 Expo, the Rosellen has remained a favorite among travelers, with a high rate of repeat guests.

The hotel offers a no-frills stay; the lobby is only open during office hours, and guests receive their own key. The largest apartment—1,150 square feet—is known as the director's suite, with two bedrooms, a large dining room, a spacious kitchen, and more storage room than you know what to do with. The remaining apartments are certainly smaller than this mammoth one, but none of them really skimp on size. The one-bedroom suites sleep four

comfortably, and all units come with fully equipped kitchens, making them a great option for families.

100-2030 Barclay St., Vancouver, B.C. V6G 1L5. ✆ **888/317-6648** or 604/689-4807. Fax 604/684-3327. www.rosellensuites.com. 31 units. June-Sept C$175 (US$113) 1-bedroom apt; C$200-C$280 (US$129-US$181) 2-bedroom apt; C$375 (US$242) penthouse. Oct-May C$110(US$71) 1-bedroom apt; C$140-C$200 (US$90-US$129) 2-bedroom apt; C$300 (US$194) penthouse. Minimum 3-night stay. Rates include up to 4 people in a 1-bedroom apt and 6 in a 2-bedroom apt. Cots and cribs free. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Limited parking C$5 (US$3.25); reserve when booking room. Pets accepted, C$15 (US$9.70) per day. **Amenities:** Access to nearby health club and tennis courts; coin laundry; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* TV, dataport, modern kitchen, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

Sunset Inn Travel Apartments *Value* Just on the edge of the residential West End neighborhood, the Sunset Inn offers spacious accommodations for a very reasonable price. Units are either studios or one-bedroom apartments and come with fully equipped kitchens. Like many other hotels in this part of town, the Sunset Inn started its life as an apartment building, which means that the rooms are much bigger than your average hotel room. All have balconies, but the views are nothing special in this part of town. For those traveling with children, the one-bedroom suites have a separate bedroom and a pullout couch (two in the larger one-bedrooms) in the living room. The furnishings currently are a bit dated with eighties-style black-and-chrome dining sets and such, but the hotel is in the process of updating and renovating the rooms. If style matters, request a refurnished unit when making your reservation.

1111 Burnaby St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1P4. ✆ **800/786-1997** or 604/688-2474. Fax 604/669-3340. www.sunsetinn.com. 50 units. C$88-C$168 (US$57-US$108) studio; C$98-C$188 (US$63-US$121) 1-bedroom suite. Weekly rates and other off-season discounts available. AE, DC, MC, V. Free parking. **Amenities:** Exercise room; coin laundry; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* TV, kitchen, coffeemaker.

West End Guest House *★★ Finds* A beautiful heritage home built in 1906, the West End Guest House is a fine example of what the neighborhood looked like up until the early '50s, before the concrete towers and condos replaced the original Edwardian homes. Decorated with beautiful early-20th-century antiques and an amazing collection of vintage photographs of Vancouver, this is a wonderful respite from the hustle and bustle of the West End. The seven guest rooms are beautifully furnished and offer the ultimate in bedtime luxury: feather mattresses, down duvets, and your very own resident stuffed animal. Particularly indulgent is the Grand Queen Suite, an attic-level bedroom with skylights, brass bed, fireplace, sitting area, and claw-foot bathtub. Owner Evan Penner pampers his

guests with a scrumptious breakfast and serves iced tea and sherry in the afternoon. Throughout the day, guests have access to the porch kitchen stocked with home-baked munchies and refreshments. If you ask nicely, Penner will even crank up the gramophone.

1362 Haro St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1G2. ✆ **604/681-2889.** Fax 604/688-8812. www.westendguesthouse.com. 7 units. C$145-C$250 (US$94-US$161) double. Rates include full breakfast. AE, DISC, MC, V. Free valet parking. **Amenities:** Complimentary bikes; concierge; business center; laundry service; nonsmoking facility. *In room:* TV/VCR, dataport, hair dryer.

INEXPENSIVE

Buchan Hotel Built in 1926, this charming three-story building is tucked away on a quiet tree-lined residential street in the West End. It's less than 2 blocks from Stanley Park and Denman Street and 10 minutes by foot from the business district. The standard rooms are quite plain; be prepared for cramped quarters and tiny bathrooms, half of which are shared, yet still nice and clean. The best rooms in the house are the executive rooms. These front-corner rooms are nicely furnished, and the bathrooms are spotless. There are only four of them, so book in advance. The hotel also offers in-house bike and ski storage.

1906 Haro St., Vancouver, B.C. V6G 1H7. ✆ **800/668-6654** or 604/685-5354. Fax 604/685-5367. www.buchanhotel.com. 60 units, 30 with private bathroom. C$45-C$75 (US$29-US$48) double with shared bath, C$70-C$95 (US$45-US$61) double with private bath; C$110-C$135 (US$71-US$87) executive room. Children 2 and under stay free in parents' room. Weekly rates and off-season discounts available. AE, DC, MC, V. Street parking available. **Amenities:** Reading lounge; activities desk; nonsmoking rooms; coin laundry. *In room:* TV, iron and hairdryer available upon request, no phone.

Hostelling International Vancouver Downtown Hostel Located in a converted nunnery, this new and modern curfew-free hostel is an extremely convenient base of operations from which to explore downtown. The beach is a few blocks south; downtown is a 10-minute walk north. Most beds are in quad dorms, with a limited number of doubles and triples available. Except for two rooms with a private bathroom, all bathroom facilities are shared. Rooms and facilities are accessible for travelers with disabilities. There are common cooking facilities, as well as a rooftop patio and game room. The hostel is extremely busy in the summertime, so book ahead. Many organized activities such as ski packages and tours can be booked at the hostel. There's free shuttle service to the bus/train station and Jericho Beach.

1114 Burnaby St. (at Thurlow St.), Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1P1. ✆ **888/203-4302** or 604/684-4565. Fax 604/684-4540. www.hihostels.ca. 68 rooms (44 4-person shared

rooms, 24 double or triple private rooms). Beds C$20 (US$13) IYHA members, C$24 (US$15) nonmembers; doubles C$55 (US$35) members, C$64 (US$41) nonmembers; triples C$70 (US$45) members, C$86 (US$55) nonmembers. Annual adult membership C$35 (US$23). MC, V. Limited free parking. **Amenities:** Bike rental; activities desk; game room; coin laundry. *In room:* No phone.

Sylvia Hotel Built in 1912 when the West End was relatively unpopulated, the Sylvia is on the shores of English Bay just a few blocks from Stanley Park. One of Vancouver's oldest hotels, the gray-stone, ivy-wreathed exterior is grand, and the lobby sets up high expectations with its beautiful stain-glass windows, marble staircase, red carpets, and overstuffed chairs. Alas, the elegance does not carry over to the rooms, which are rather plainly furnished with slightly mismatched furniture. The best rooms are located on the higher floors facing English Bay; views of the water get better in the winter when the tall trees lining the beach lose their leaves. The suites have fully equipped kitchens and are large enough for families. Sixteen rooms in the 12-year-old low-rise annex have individual heating but offer less atmosphere.

1154 Gilford St., Vancouver, B.C. V6G 2P6. ✆ **604/681-9321.** Fax 604/682-3551. www.sylviahotel.com. 118 units. Apr-Sept C$75-C$135 (US$48-US$87) double. Oct-Mar C$75-C$100 (US$48-US$65) double. Children under 18 stay free in parents' room. AE, DC, MC, V. Parking C$7 (US$4.50). **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; concierge; limited room service; dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* TV, dataport, hair dryer.

3 The West Side

Right across False Creek from downtown and the West End is Vancouver's West Side. If your agenda includes a Granville Island shopping spree, exploration of the island's numerous artists' studios and galleries, or strolls through the sunken garden at Queen Elizabeth Park; or if you require close proximity to the airport without staying in an "airport hotel," you'll find both cozy B&Bs and hotels that will meet your needs.

EXPENSIVE

Granville Island Hotel ★★ *Finds* One of the city's best kept hotel secrets is the Granville Island Hotel. Not only can you stroll, jog, or blade to this hotel but how about kayaking or sailing in? Tucked away on the edge of Granville Island, the hotel offers a unique waterfront setting in the heart of some of the city's most interesting galleries and theaters, and just a short stroll from the cornucopia that is the Granville Island food market. A recent expansion has brought the number of rooms to 85. The transition between the

original wing and the new addition is practically seamless and all rooms are spacious with large bathrooms and soaker tubs. Most rooms also have a microwave (or you can request one from housekeeping) to warm up any goodies you bring back from the market. Thanks to large windows, the rooms are extremely bright and take advantage of the fabulous views of False Creek. The very best views, however, are to be had in one of the Penthouse suites, located in the new wing. These units are humongous, celebrity-worthy suites with private deck, dining room with fireplace and sitting area, large bedroom, and raised Jacuzzi tub. Ultimately affordable at C$450 (US$290) in high season and C$350 (US$226) the rest of the year, advance booking is required.

1253 Johnston St., Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3R9. ✆ **800/663-1840** or 604/683-7373. Fax 604/683-3061. www.granvilleislandhotel.com. 85 units. C$160-C$230 (US$103-US$148) double; C$190-C$260 (US$123-US$168) 1-bedroom suite; C$350-C$450 (US$226-US$290) penthouse suite. Off-season discounts available. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$6 (US$3.90). Pets accepted. **Amenities:** Restaurant; brew pub; access to nearby health club and tennis courts; small exercise room; Jacuzzi; bike rental; concierge; tour desk; car-rental desk; business center; limited room service; massage; babysitting; laundry; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV w/pay movies, fax, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

MODERATE

Kenya Court Ocean Front Guest House ★ *Finds* Every room in this three-story architectural landmark at Kitsilano Beach has an unobstructed waterfront view of Vanier Park, English Bay, downtown Vancouver, and the Coast Mountains. It's an ideal launching pad for strolls around Granville Island, Vanier Park, the Maritime Museum, the Vancouver Museum, and other Kitsilano sights. Each guest suite—with a living room, bathroom, separate bedroom, and full kitchen—is a large converted apartment that's been tastefully furnished. A full breakfast is served in the rooftop glass solarium.

2230 Cornwall Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1B5. ✆ **604/738-7085.** H&dwilliams@telus.net. 4 units. C$135-C$165 (US$87-US$106) double. Extra person C$50 (US$32). No credit cards. Garage or street parking. **Amenities:** Nonsmoking facility; outdoor pool; tennis; jogging trails nearby. *In room:* TV, fax, kitchenette, fridge, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

INEXPENSIVE

Hostelling International Vancouver Jericho Beach Hostel Located in a former military barracks, this hostel is surrounded by an expansive lawn adjacent to Jericho Beach. Individuals, families with children over age 5, and groups are welcome. The 10 private rooms can accommodate up to six people. These particular accommodations

go fast; so if you want one, call far in advance. The dormitory-style arrangements are well maintained and supervised. Linens are provided. Basic, inexpensive food is served in the cafe April through October. During the rest of the year, food is available at the front desk. You have the option of cooking for yourself year-round in the hostel's kitchen. The hostel's program director operates tours and activities.

1515 Discovery St., Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4K5. ✆ **888/203-4303** or 604/224-3208. Fax 604/224-4852. www.hihostels.ca. 286 beds in 14 dorms; 10 private family rooms. No private bathrooms. C$18 (US$12) IYHA members, C$22 (US$14) nonmembers dorm rooms; C$50-C$75 (US$32-US$48) members, C$60-C$90 (US$39-US$58) nonmembers family rooms. Annual adult membership C$37 (US$24). MC, V. Parking C$3 (US$1.95). Children under 5 not allowed. **Amenities:** Cafe; bike rental; activities desk; coin laundry; nonsmoking rooms.

Johnson Heritage House Bed & Breakfast ★★ *Finds* Innkeeper Ron Johnson is a collector. His antique phonographs, coffee grinders, wooden giraffes, hobby horses, Indonesian stone sculpture, and countless other objects are on charming display in various nooks and crannies of this old Craftsman home in Vancouver's quiet Kerrisdale neighborhood (a 15-min. drive from the Vancouver airport and about a 10-min. drive to downtown). The Garden room downstairs is quiet and self-contained, with big bright windows overlooking a garden brimming with raspberries and blueberries. Upstairs, the small but cozy Sunshine room (shower only) offers a balcony with a view of the back garden, while the larger Mountain View room offers an excellent view of the Lions and the other peaks of the North Shore. And though the private bathroom for the Mountain View is across the hall, it comes with a giant two-person claw-foot tub. Best of all is the Carousel room. It's large and bright, with a big four-poster brass bed, a slate fireplace, and a generously sized bathroom. A full breakfast is served in the spacious dining room that looks out onto the tree-shaded garden.

2278 W. 34th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6M 1G6. ✆ **604/266-4175.** Fax 604/266-4175. www.johnsons-inn-vancouver.com. 4 units, 1 with shower only. C$125-C$180 (US$81-US$116) double. Rates include full breakfast. No credit cards. Free parking. **Amenities:** Non-smoking facility; Internet access. *In room:* TV/VCR, dataport with high-speed Internet access, hair dryer, iron.

Penny Farthing Inn Built in 1912, this landmark house on a quiet residential street is filled with antiques and stained glass. There's a common room with a fireplace; in the backyard, an English-country-style garden is filled with trees and fragrant flowers.

All the guest rooms are decorated with lovely pine furniture. On the top floor, Abigail's Suite is bright and self-contained with nice views from both front and back. Bettina's Room features a fireplace and a small balcony. Sophie's Room, though smaller, has a nice porch with two wicker chairs. Lucinda's Room—with a private bathroom across the hall—offers the best value of the four. Coffee and a selection of teas and hot chocolate are always on hand for guests. Fix a cuppa and watch the resident cats at play while you relax.

2855 W. Sixth Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1X2. ✆ **866/739-9002** or 604/739-9002. Fax 604/739-9004. www.pennyfarthinginn.com. 4 units. May-Oct C$120 (US$77) double; C$175 (US$113) suite. Nov-Apr C$100 (US$64) double; C$150 (US$96) suite. Rates include full breakfast. No credit cards. Street parking. **Amenities:** Free use of bikes; business center; Internet access; nonsmoking rooms. *In room:* TV/VCR and CD player (in suites only), dataport, fridge, coffeemaker, hair dryer.

The University of British Columbia Conference Centre ★★ *Value*

The University of British Columbia is in a pretty forested setting on the tip of Point Grey—a convenient location if you plan to spend a lot of time either in Kitsilano or at the university itself. It's also not bad if you have a car, but otherwise, it's a good half-hour bus ride from downtown. Although these are student dorms most of the year, rooms are usually available—but don't expect luxury. The 17-story Walter Gage Residence offers new and comfortable accommodations; many are located on the upper floors with sweeping views of the city and ocean. One- and six-bedroom suites here come equipped with private bathrooms, kitchenettes, TVs, and phones. Each studio suite has a twin bed; each one-bedroom suite features a queen bed; the six-bedroom Tower suites—a particularly good deal for families—each feature one double bed and five twin beds. Located next door, the year-round Gage Court suites have two twin beds in one bedroom and a queen-size Murphy bed in the sitting room.

5961 Student Union Blvd., Vancouver, B.C. V6T 2C9. ✆ **604/822-1000.** Fax 604/822-1001. www.ubcaccommodation.com. About 1,900 units. Gage Towers and Pacific Spirit Hostel units only available May 10-Aug 26. Gage Towers: C$37-C$59 (US$24-U$38) standard or premium single with shared bathroom; C$89-C$209 (US$57-US$135) studio, 1-, or 6-bedroom suites. Pacific Spirit Hostel: C$24 (US$16) single; C$48 (US$31) double; C$59 (US$38) studio suite with private bathroom. Located adjacent to the Gage Residence, the 47 West Coast Suites are available year-round: May-Sept C$129-C$139 (US$83-US$90) suite; Oct-Apr C$119-C$129 (US$77-US$83) suite. AE, MC, V. Free parking May-Aug 26 at Gage Towers; other areas C$5 (US$3.25) per day. Bus: 4, 10, or 99. **Amenities** (nearby on campus): Restaurant; cafeteria; pub; public golf course; Olympic-size swimming pool; tennis courts; weight room; sauna for C$5 (US$3.35) per person; video arcade; laundry; all rooms nonsmoking. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

4 The North Shore (North Vancouver & West Vancouver)

The North Shore cities of North and West Vancouver are pleasant and lush and much less hurried than Vancouver. Staying here also offers easy access to the North Shore mountains and its attractions, including hiking trails, the Capilano Suspension Bridge, and the ski slopes on Mount Seymour, Grouse Mountain, and Cypress Bowl. Staying here is also often cheaper than in Vancouver. The disadvantage is that if you want to take your car into Vancouver, there are only two bridges, and during rush hours they're painfully slow. The SeaBus, however, is not only quick, but fairly scenic.

EXPENSIVE

Lonsdale Quay Hotel ★ Directly across the Burrard Inlet from the Canada Place Pier, the Lonsdale Quay Hotel is at the water's edge above the Lonsdale Quay Market at the SeaBus terminal. An escalator rises from the midst of the market's food, crafts, and souvenir stalls to the front desk on the third floor. The rooms are simply furnished and tastefully decorated, without the grandeur or luxurious touches of comparably priced downtown hotels. Nevertheless, the hotel has unique and fabulous harbor and city views, is only 15 minutes by bus or car from Grouse Mountain Ski Resort and Capilano Regional Park, and provides easy access to the BC Rail and ferry terminals.

123 Carrie Cates Court, North Vancouver, B.C. V6M 3K7. ✆ **800/836-6111** or 604/986-6111. Fax 604/986-8782. www.lonsdalequayhotel.com. 83 units. High season C$125-C$225 (US$81-US$145) double or twin; C$350 (US$226) suite. Low season C$90-C$165 (US$58-US$106) double or twin; C$250 (US$161) suite. Extra person C$25 (US$16). Senior discount available. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking C$7 (US$4.50); free on weekends and holidays. SeaBus: Lonsdale Quay. **Amenities:** 2 restaurants; small exercise room; spa; bike rental; children's play area; concierge; tour desk; shopping arcade; limited room service; massage; babysitting; laundry service; same-day dry cleaning; nonsmoking hotel; executive-level rooms. *In room:* A/C, TV, dataport, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

MODERATE

Beachside Bed & Breakfast ★★ *Finds* Vancouver is blessed by geography, and this B&B takes full advantage; it sits on its own private little beach on the shores of English Bay, with a sweeping view of Stanley Park, the Lion's Gate Bridge, and the tall skyline of downtown Vancouver. The upstairs common area of this split-level house features wall-to-ceiling windows and binoculars for gazing at the seals and bald eagles and (on rare occasions) killer whales that swim

by. There's also a fireplace, VCR and videos, and lots of good books should the ocean view lose its appeal. Downstairs are two beachfront rooms featuring floor-to-ceiling windows. The Seaside room features a jetted tub for two in a somewhat small but private bathroom, while the Oceanfront room has a huge private Jacuzzi big enough for six. Located out back, the smallest and least expensive of the rooms—Diane's Room—features a small patio but lacks an ocean view.

4208 Evergreen Ave., West Vancouver, B.C. V7V 1H1. ✆ **800/563-3311** or 604/922-7773. www.beach.bc.ca. 3 units. C$150-C$300 (US$97-US$194) double. Extra person C$30 (US$19). Rates include breakfast tray. MC, V. Free parking, movies. Bus: 250, 251, 252, or 253. **Amenities:** Beachside Jacuzzi; nonsmoking hotel. *In room:* TV/VCR, fridge, microwave, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron.

INEXPENSIVE

Mountainside Manor This is the closest house to the ski slopes and hiking trails of Grouse Mountain and the glorious nature of the North Shore. But though it sits high above the city on the edge of the forest, the Manor is anything but rustic. Indeed, it's an ultramodern home with a contemporary, even avant-garde feel. The upstairs City Room features a four-poster bed and a view of the Vancouver skyline, while the Panorama Room—the largest of the rooms—has a queen-size bed, a Jacuzzi, and views of the mountains, the city, English Bay, and Vancouver Island. Downstairs you'll find a common room with a fireplace, but even better is the backyard hot tub with a view of the soaring North Shore peaks.

5909 Nancy Greene Way, North Vancouver, B.C. V7R 4W6. ✆ **800/967-1319** or 604/990-9772. Fax 604/985-8470. www.mtnsideaccom.com May-Oct C$110-C$145 (US$71-US$94) double. Nov-Apr C$95-C$135 (US$61-US$87) double. Rates include full breakfast. Off-season discounts available. MC, V. Free parking. *In room:* TV, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron, no phone.

4

Where to Dine

Two thousand restaurants? Five thousand? Hard to say really, but Vancouverites do dine out more than residents of any other Canadian city. Outstanding meals are available in all price ranges and in many different cuisines, from Caribbean to Mongolian and Japanese. Even better, over the past few years Vancouverites have come to expect top quality, and yet they absolutely refuse to pay the kind of top dollar restaurant-goers pay in New York or San Francisco. For discerning diners from elsewhere, Vancouver is a steal.

The cuisine buzzword here is West Coast. Justifiable pride in local produce, game, and seafood is combined with innovation and creativity. More restaurants are shifting to seasonal, even monthly, menus, giving their chefs greater freedom. The trend to tapas remains alive and well. By contrast, *fusion*—the promiscuous mixing of spices and ingredients from around the globe—is dying out, replaced by a new culinary rectitude.

Once less than palatable, British Columbian wines have improved to the point that local vintners are now winning international acclaim. The big wine-producing areas are in the Okanagan Valley (in southern British Columbia's dry interior) or else on southern Vancouver Island. (If you have a few extra days, either area is definitely worth a visit.) Fortunately, these wines have received far less publicity than they deserve, so some great bargains can still be had.

There's no provincial tax on restaurant meals in British Columbia, but venues add the 7% federal goods and services tax (GST). Restaurant hours vary. Lunch is typically served from noon to 1 or 2pm; Vancouverites begin dining around 6:30pm, later in summer. Reservations are recommended at most restaurants and are essential at popular places.

1 Downtown & Yaletown

VERY EXPENSIVE

C ★★★ SEAFOOD/WEST COAST It's become almost habit to quietly backhand the conspicuous consumption of the '80s

generation—what's forgotten is just how well they consumed. C brings it all back, in a room done up in brilliant shades of Miami white, with the decor itself providing a little postindustrial commentary. Look for pale-green bread baskets made from cut sheets of heavy-gauge rubber, footrests upholstered with truck-tire retreads, and faux vinyl siding in the restrooms. Beyond the decor, however, C re-creates the '80s through the sheer indulgent quality with which they serve fish. C's taster box—a kind of small wooden high-rise of appetizers—includes salmon gravlax cured in Saskatoon berry tea, artichoke carpaccio, abalone tempura, and grilled garlic squid. A variety of seafood main courses are available, but for the ultimate dining experience, let chef Robert Clark show off (he's dying to), and order the seven-course sampling menu. Savor the exquisite cuisine as you watch the sun go down over the marina.

1600 Howe St. ✆ **604/681-1164.** www.crestaurant.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$21-C$32 (US$14-US$21). AE, DC, MC, V. Dinner daily 5:30-11pm; lunch Mon-Fri 11:30am-2:30pm and Sun 11am-2:30pm. Valet parking C$7 (US$4.55). Bus: 1 or 2.

Cloud 9 ★★ *Moments* WEST COAST Want the city laid out at your feet and delivered to your table? Take the elevator to the Landmark Hotel's 42nd floor. The view may be of English Bay, Stanley Park with the North Shore Mountains, or the towers of downtown. Yes, it's a revolving restaurant, but hang on just a minute before you think "tourist trap" and dive for the escape hatch. The restaurant has been working hard on improving the menu, and the new chef offers cuisine that almost equals the superlative views. Seafood plays an important role here, but other high points include steak, lamb, chicken, and a few Asian dishes. The prices are slightly higher than in comparable restaurants, but consider that a fair premium for the million-dollar view.

If you decide not to stay for supper, the lounge has excellent—and reasonably priced—martinis. On weekends there's a small cover.

1400 Robson St. ✆ **604/662-8328.** Reservations recommended. Lunch main courses C$8-C$12 (US$5.20-US$7.80); dinner main courses C$20-C$40 (US$13-US$26); brunch C$23 (US$15). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 6:30-10:30am, 11:30am-2pm, 5-11pm; Sun brunch 11:30am-2:30pm. Bus: 5.

Diva at the Met ★★ WEST COAST Since opening a few years ago next to the newly revamped Metropolitan Hotel, Diva at the Met and its chef Michael Noble have made walking off with city restaurant awards a bit of a habit. Noble himself has represented Canada at the Bocuse d'Or competition in France. His dishes extol

Downtown Vancouver Dining

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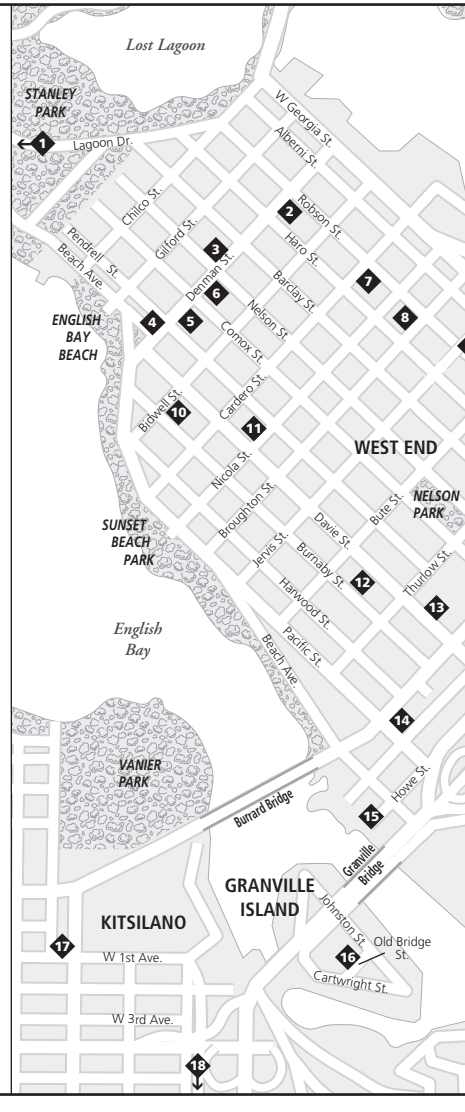

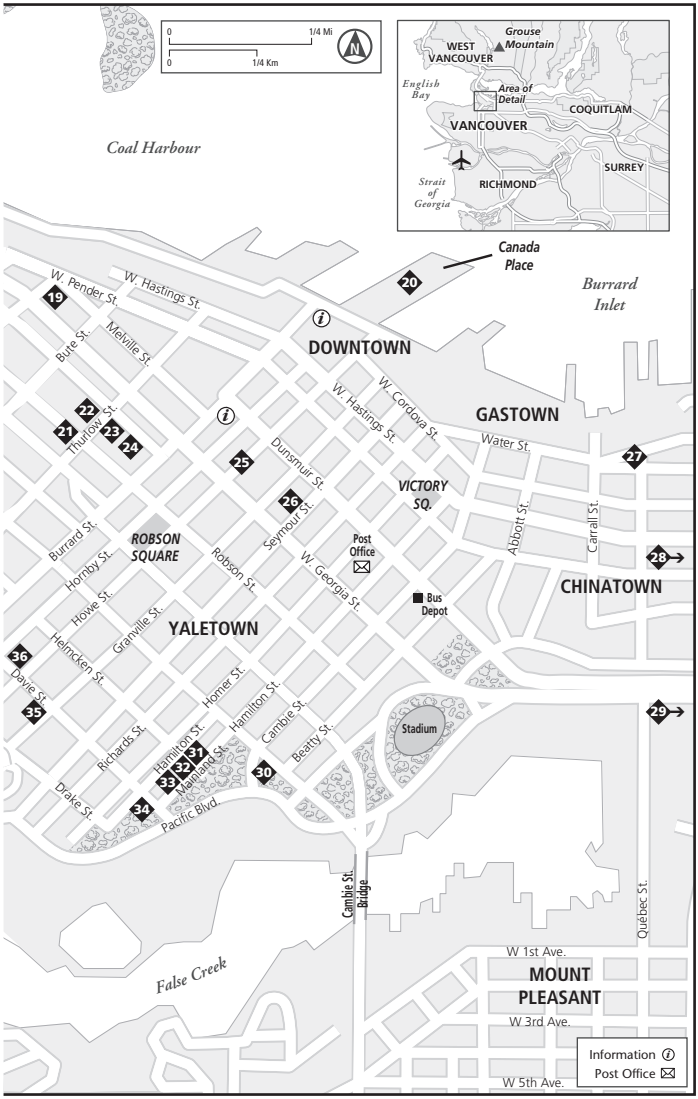
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Abbott St.
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Howe St.
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Stadium
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the virtues of fresh seasonal ingredients and a light approach to spices and seasonings. Starters include house-smoked salmon with Québec foie gras. For the main course, try halibut cheeks with black-olive tapenade. Diva's tasting menu is also very popular, and its weekend brunch is among the best in town.

645 Howe St. ✆ **604/602-7788.** www.metropolitan.com. Reservations recommended. Dinner main courses C$26-C$44 (US$17-US$28); lunch C$12-C$23 (US$7.80-US$15). AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 6:30am-1am. Bus: 4 or 7.

The Five Sails ★★ WEST COAST The Five Sails's view of Coal Harbour, the Lions Gate Bridge, and the Coast Mountains is as spectacular as the food. For a number of years the Five Sails served up its own interpretation of West Coast or Pacific Northwest cuisine, but a recent makeover and new chef have turned the ship around and set a course for France. Look for appetizers that combine pasta with seafood, like the Dungeness crab ravioli served with a basil flan and tomato emulsion. As a hotel restaurant, Five Sails does cover the bases with chicken, steak, and vegetarian dishes; for something more French, try the Marseille bouillabaisse, thick with seafood, or the grilled halibut with sautéed morel mushrooms, shallot confit, and finished with a rich veal jus. The Five Sails's fine wine selection highlights a different B.C. winery every month.

999 Canada Place Way, in the Pan-Pacific Hotel. ✆ **604/891-2892.** Reservations recommended. Main courses C$25-C$38 (US$16-US$25); tasting menu C$55-C$65 (US$35-US$42). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 6-10pm. SkyTrain: Waterfront.

Gotham Steakhouse and Cocktail Bar ★★ STEAK Since Gotham first opened its doors, a number of high-profile restaurants have brought home the beef—but nobody does it like Gotham. The room is of ambitious proportions—a 40-foot high timber ceiling divided down the middle with a cocktail bar on one side, a dining room on the other, and a patio with fireplace balancing things out. Furnishings are aggressively masculine. The wine list is encyclopedic. And then there's the food: The deep-fried calamari appetizer was a light and tasty revelation. Jumbo shrimp were sumo-sized. And the steaks are incredible: a porterhouse cut the size of a catcher's mitt, a petit filet mignon as tall as half a bread loaf. The meat just melts away on your tongue. Better to pass on the forgettable veggie side dishes entirely and spend the money on another glass of French merlot. The service is impeccable.

615 Seymour St. ✆ **604/605-8282.** Fax 604/605-8285. www.gothamsteakhouse.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$27-C$49 (US$17-US$2). AE, DC, MC, V. Dinner daily 5-11pm (cocktail bar somewhat later). Bus: 4 or 7.

EXPENSIVE

Amarcord ★★ NORTHERN ITALIAN Traditional Northern Italian cuisine doesn't get much respect these days, but that's just what Amarcord does, and so well that it's worth swearing off mango-corn chutney sauté and rediscovering the joys of freshly made pasta or risotto teamed with a lovingly prepared sauce. Think gnocchi with Italian sausage, fresh tomato and basil, or linguini with mussels, scallops, and tiger prawns. Wines hail from Tuscany and California. The atmosphere is formal without being fussy—a place you could bring your 9-year-old. Service is knowledgeable and very friendly.

104-1168 Hamilton St. ✆ **604/681-6500.** Reservations recommended. Main courses C$14-C$20 (US$9.10-US$13). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Fri 11:30am-2pm; daily 5:30-10pm. Closed on holidays. Bus: 2.

Blue Water Café and Raw Bar ★★★ SEAFOOD If you had to describe the Blue Water Café in one word it would be *fresh,* as in fresh seafood and a fresh concept. The raw bar, presided over by Masanori (Max) Katsuno, serves sushi, oysters, sashimi, and a range of Asian-inspired seafood dishes. We started off with "sushi" rolls of scallops and thinly sliced cucumbers wrapped in smoked salmon. For the main courses we gladly put ourselves in the hands of James Walt who works his magic in the large open kitchen. A lightly seared yellow fin tuna in a citrus-pepper crust came served on a bed of yellow beans, seasoned with herb- and basil-infused oil. When in season, order the diver-caught sea scallops, plainly grilled and served with sautéed zucchini, pancetta, and arugula in a maple-chive dressing. Since opening in the fall of 2000, the Blue Water has become one of Vancouver's hottest restaurants, a place to see and be seen. Reservations are recommended on weekends, but it is just as much fun to wait at the bar, watching the sushi maestro at work while you try one of the frozen vodkas or house martinis made with "squeezed-to-order" fruit juice.

1095 Hamilton St., Yaletown. ✆**604/688-8078.** www.bluewatercafe.net. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$17-C$30 (US$11-US$19). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 11am-1am (light menu 3-5pm and 11pm-1am). Bus: 2.

Circolo ★ ITALIAN The newest addition to a restaurant empire that already includes more formal Italian establishments in Whistler and Gastown (Umberto al Porto Borgo), as well as the 26-year-old original il Giardino di Umberto Ristorante on Hornby St., Circolo represents Umberto Menghi's move into the rough-and-tumble restaurant competition of trendy Yaletown, where the clientele is

younger and prettier, dining options abound, and dinner is a less formal, more late night affair. Menghi's strategy with Circolo is to meld together a restaurant, bar, and bistro under one roof, and flank it outside with a wide green patio. Decor is a bit over the top, with lots of gold gilt and limitless little cherubim flitting here and there over the banquettes. The cuisine—a mix of traditional northern Italian and local seafood—is excellent, and remarkably reasonably priced. The antipasto platter comes heaped with scallops, prawns, prosciutto, tuna, and grilled peppers. Mains include a lovely, delicate veal served in port wine jus and accompanied by crunchy grilled veggies, as well as a melt-on-your tongue entree of ahi tuna. The wine is divided evenly between B.C., Italy, and California, and if mark-ups on some of the bottles are a tad high, Umberto makes up for it with a large selection of wines by the glass. Indeed, if you're not in the mood for a full meal, the bar at Circolo is a great place to have a glass and snack while you watch the pretty people preen (Thurs-Sat accompanied by music from a baby grand piano). On warm weather days Circolo's patio is one of the city's finest.

1116 Mainland St. ✆ **604/687-1116.** Fax 604/669-9723. www.umberto.com/circolo.htm. Reservations required. Main courses C$16-C$33 (US$10-US$21). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 5pm-1am. Bus: 2.

il Giardino di Umberto Ristorante ★★★ ITALIAN Twenty-six years ago, restaurant magnate Umberto Menghi started humbly with this small restaurant tucked away in a yellow heritage house at the bottom of Hornby Street. His empire now includes Umberto al Porto Borgo Antico on Water Street, Circolo in Yaletown (see above), and two locations in Whistler (Trattoria and Il Caminetto), but Il Giardino still serves up the best Italian fare in town. A larger restaurant now adjoins the original house, opening up into a spacious and bright dining room that recreates the ambience of an Italian villa. The menu leans heavily to Tuscan favorites emphasizing pasta and game. Entrees include classics such as osso buco with saffron risotto and squash tortellini with portobello mushrooms in truffle oil. A daily list of specials makes the most of seasonal fresh ingredients, often offering outstanding seafood dishes. We tasted the plumpest mussels steamed in a rich garlic-and-white-wine broth, followed by a delicious halibut topped with artichoke and grilled vegetables. Desserts go creatively beyond tiramisu: try the mandarin orange/blood orange panna cotta or lemon mascarpone gelato with hazelnut pound cake. Like all of Umberto's establishments, the wine list is comprehensive and well chosen, with many excellent bottles

reasonably priced at under C$40 (US$26). After sampling the cuisine, more than a few devoted foodies have run off to enroll in Umberto's Tuscan cooking school, set in one of the hill towns of Tuscany.

1382 Hornby St. ✆ **604/669-2422.** Fax 604/669-9723. www.umberto.com. Reservations required. Main courses C$14-C$33 (US$9.10-US$21). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Fri noon-2:30pm; Mon-Sat 6-11pm. Bus: 1 or 22.

Joe Fortes Seafood and Chop House ★★ SEAFOOD Named after the burly Caribbean seaman and popular local hero who became English Bay's first lifeguard, Joe Fortes has been known for years as the place where the young and tanned would meet for mutual schmoozing and raw oysters. A little older and more sun-savvy crowd—now much diluted with tourists—still brings a buzz to the large casual dining room. For a sit-down dinner, guests have the choice of two levels of indoor dining or a table on the fabulous rooftop patio, weather permitting. The kitchen serves up good seafood at affordable prices. We really enjoyed the chef's choice of more unusual seafood items such as the pan-fried skate. Also on offer were marlin, ling cod, mahimahi, snapper, and sable wish as well as the more standard choices of salmon, halibut, and tuna. Each selection arrives simply grilled or sautéed and is served with freshly grilled vegetables. Indecisive types can order a trio of fish, sampling the various catches of the day. Heavy on the white, the wine list is gargantuan and includes some outrageously expensive C$1,000 (US$645) bottles, but luckily for those of us who have seen their mutual funds take a nosedive there is plenty in the C$30 (US$19) range.

777 Thurlow St. (at Robson). ✆ **604/669-1940.** www.joefortes.ca. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$17-C$37 (US$11-US$24). AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 11am-10:30pm. Bus: 5.

La Terrazza ★★ ITALIAN Located on the edge of Yaletown, La Terrazza's sleek, modern exterior contrasts sharply with the warm bustling dining room inside. Two of the three owners hail from Italy, and the kitchen is in the capable hands of Neapolitan chef Gennaro Iorio. No fusion or complicated culinary acrobatics here; on the contrary, many dishes stand out for their simplicity. The menu changes with the seasons, and a new tasting menu with matching wines highlights a different culinary region of Italy every month. One of the more intriguing appetizers is the bocconcini cheese, wrapped in prosciutto and radicchio, grilled and drizzled with strawberry vinaigrette. Main courses include various pasta dishes, but following the chef's recommendation, we tried the roasted

guinea hen and duck breast with Frangelico brandy; both were outstanding (though the duck breast was the hands-down favorite). The wine list is extensive, offering selections from all over the world. Save room for dessert, particularly the white cheesecake baked in phyllo pastry topped with sour cherries and fruit coulis.

1088 Cambie St. ✆ **604/899-4449.** www.laterrazza.ca. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$16-C$30 (US$10-US$19). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Thurs 5-11pm; Fri-Sat 5pm-midnight; Sun 5-10pm. Bus: 2.

MODERATE

Bin 941 Tapas Parlour TAPAS/CASUAL Still booming five years on, Bin 941 is the latest in trendy tapas dining. True, the music's too loud and the room's too small, but the food that alights on the bar or ever so tiny tables is quite delicious, and, like all tapas, fun to eat. Look especially for local seafood offerings like scallops and tiger prawns in bonito butter sauce. Sharing is unavoidable in this sliver of a bistro, so come prepared for socializing. So successful was the original model that a second Bin, dubbed Bin 942, has opened up at 1521 West Broadway (✆ **604/673-1246**). And thanks to the "loose" liquor laws, both Bins are now open until 2am.

941 Davie St. ✆ **604/683-1246.** www.bin941.com. Reservations not accepted. All plates are C$11 (US$7.15). MC, V. Daily 5pm-2am. Bus: 4, 5, or 8.

The Crime Lab ★ WEST COAST Illuminated by the cheap glow of neon and with menus covered by lurid jacket drawings of 1930s pulp fiction, the Crime Lab is an eternity of fun. The martini list is inspired by figures from Vancouver's underworld. Tables are tight in this stiletto-thin establishment, but for a group of 8 to 12, it's tough to beat the triangular table set at the point of the Lab's long blade. Like most Vancouver restaurants, the menu covers all possibilities, but seafood is the specialty. Appetizers are superb—crab cakes with mango ginger aioli; mussels steamed with a salsa of scallions, cilantro, and vinegar; or Earl Bay oysters with a vinaigrette of sake ginger and cucumber. Main courses such as seafood paella are proof of the kitchen's abilities. The wine list sticks close to home, and service is friendly and knowledgeable.

1280 W. Pender St. ✆ **604/732-7463.** Reservations accepted. Main courses C$15-C$19 (US$9.75-US$12). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 5pm-2am; Sun 5pm-midnight. Bus: 135.

La Bodega ★★ *Value* TAPAS On a cold and rainy winter evening there is no better retreat than this warm, dark Spanish bar. Grab one of the tables or sneak into a little romantic corner and order some soul-warming Mediterranean comfort food. Expect authentic

Spanish tapas—garlic prawns, ceviche, marinated mushrooms, pan-fried squid, and good black olives. Specials on the blackboard regularly include *conejo* (rabbit with tomatoes and peppers), quail, and B.C. scallops. All of it comes with lots of crusty bread for soaking up the wonderful garlicky goo. La Bodega has a good selection of Portuguese and Spanish wines and the best sangria in town.

1277 Howe St. ✆ **604/684-8815.** Reservations accepted. Tapas C$3.95-C$7.95 (US$2.55-US$5.10); main courses C$11-C$18 (US$7.15-US$12). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Fri 4:30-midnight; Sat 5pm-midnight; Sun 5-11pm. Bus: 4 or 7.

Simply Thai ★ THAI Finally, an authentic Thai restaurant in the trendy heart of Yaletown. The small restaurant, decorated in light wood, terra-cotta tiles, and pale yellow brighten up even the most dreary winter evenings. Watch chef and owner Siriwan in the open kitchen as he cooks up a combination of northern and southern Thai dishes, always using the freshest ingredients. The appetizers are perfect finger foods: *gai satay* features succulent pieces of grilled chicken breast marinated in coconut milk and spices and covered in a peanut sauce, while the weird but delicious *cho muang* consists of violet colored dumplings stuffed with minced chicken. Main courses run the gamut of Thai cuisine: noodle dishes and coconut curries with beef, chicken, or pork, as well as a good number of vegetarian options. Don't miss the *tom kha gai,* a deceptively simple-looking coconut soup with chicken, mushrooms, and lemon grass. Siriwan creates a richly fragrant broth that balances the delicate flavors of the lemongrass and other spices with the thick coconut milk. There is no better remedy for those winter blahs.

1211 Hamilton St. ✆ **604/642-0123.** Reservations recommended on weekends. Main courses C$9-C$17 (US$5.80-US$11). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 11:30am-3pm; Sun-Wed 5pm-10pm; Thurs-Sat 5pm-midnight. Bus: 2.

INEXPENSIVE

Olympia Oyster & Fish Co. Ltd. *Finds* FISH & CHIPS This little hole in the wall, just off Vancouver's trendiest shopping street, serves up the city's best fish and chips. On any given day you'll find West End residents, German tourists, and well-heeled shoppers toting their "daily catch" from Mexx or Banana Republic vying for counter space. There are only a few tables and a window-seat counter, plus three sidewalk tables (weather permitting), but the fish is always fresh and flaky and can be grilled if you prefer. Choose from sole, halibut, or cod, which may be combined with oysters or prawns too. If you want to take home smoked salmon, the staff will wrap it up or ship it if you prefer.

820 Thurlow St. ✆ **604/685-0716.** Main courses C$6-C$10 (US$3.90-US$6.50). AE, MC, V. Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat 10am-7pm; Sun 11am-7pm. Bus: 5.

2 Gastown & Chinatown

EXPENSIVE

The Cannery ★ SEAFOOD At least some of the pleasure of eating at The Cannery comes from simply finding the place. Hop over the railway tracks and thread your way past container terminals and fish-packing plants until you're sure you're lost, and then with a last turn the road opens onto a brightly lit parking lot and there it is—a great ex-warehouse of a building hanging out over the waters of Burrard Inlet. The building itself—its beam-laded warehouse interior, loaded with old nets and seafaring memorabilia—is another hefty portion of The Cannery's charm. As for the view, it's simply stunning, one of the best in Vancouver. You'll find good, solid, traditional seafood here, often alder-grilled, with ever-changing specials to complement the salmon and halibut basics. Chefs Frederic Couton and Jacques Wan have been getting more inventive of late, but when an institution is 31 years old and still going strong, no one's ever *too* keen to rock the boat. The wine list is stellar, and the desserts are wonderfully inventive.

2205 Commissioner St., near Victoria Dr. ✆ **604/254-9606.** www.cannery seafood.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$17-C$27 (US$11-US$17). AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon-Fri 11:30am-2:30pm; Mon-Sat 5:30-10:30pm; Sun 5:30-9:30pm. Closed Dec 24-26. Bus: 7 to Victoria Dr. From downtown, head east on Hastings St., turn left on Victoria Dr. (2 blocks past Commercial Dr.), then right on Commissioner St.

MODERATE

Park Lock Seafood Restaurant *Kids* CHINESE/DIM SUM If you've never done dim sum, this traditional dining room in the very heart of Chinatown is the place to give it a try. From 8am to 3pm daily, waitresses wheel little carts loaded with Chinese delicacies past white-linen-covered tables. When you see something you like, you grab it. The final bill is based upon how many little dishes are left on your table. Dishes include spring rolls, *hargow* and *shumai* (steamed shrimp, beef, or pork dumplings), prawns wrapped in fresh white noodles, small steamed buns, sticky rice cooked in banana leaves, curried squid, and lots more. Parties of four or more are best—that way you get to try each other's food.

544 Main St. (at E. Pender St., on the 2nd floor). ✆ **604/688-1581.** Reservations recommended. Main courses C$10-C$35 (US$6.45-US$23); dim sum dishes C$2.50-C$3.25 (US$1.60-US$2.10). AE, MC, V. Daily 8am-3pm; Tues-Sun 5-10pm. Bus: 19 or 22.

Moments Dinner on the Starlight Express

BC Rail's Pacific Starlight Dinner Train departs from the North Vancouver train terminal, transporting passengers past West Vancouver's waterfront mansions, along Howe Sound's scenic shoreline, past Porteau Cove, and back. The elegant restored coaches recall a time when rail travel was as much about going as it was about getting somewhere. The cars are appointed with inlaid wood, brass, and all the other touches you'd expect in a first-class dining car from rail travel's golden age.

Seating in the salon (C$84/US$54 per person, excluding taxes, tips, and alcohol) is slightly less expensive than seating in the glass-domed observation car (C$100/US$65 per person), but the spectacular 360° view of the sun setting over Howe Sound and the surrounding mountains is worth every cent. Bring your camera. Even more than the views, the fine service and excellent West Coast cuisine make either choice worthwhile. Recent entree selections have included roasted British Columbia salmon, stuffed breast of guinea fowl, filet of beef tenderloin, and beef Wellington. For dessert, the white-chocolate soup is fast becoming the signature dish.

The train operates every Wednesday through Sunday evening from May 1 to November 1, departing from the BC Rail Station, 1311 W. First St., North Vancouver, at 6:15pm and returning at 9:45pm. The dress code calls for "fine dining attire" but recommends that women don't wear high heels. For information or reservations, contact BC Rail Passenger Services (✆ **800/363-3733** or 604/984-5246; www.bcrail.com/starlight).

Pink Pearl Kids CHINESE/DIM SUM After 20 years in the business, this is still Vancouver's best spot for dim sum. The sheer volume and bustle are astonishing. Dozens of waiters parade a cavalcade of little trolleys stacked high with baskets and steamers and bowls filled with dumplings, spring rolls, shrimp balls, chicken feet, and even more obscure and delightful offerings. At the tables, extended families of Chinese banter, joke, and feast. Towers of empty plates and bowls pile up in the middle, a tribute to the appetites of hungry brunchers,

as well as the growing bill; fortunately, dim sum is still a steal, perhaps the best and most fun way to sample Cantonese cooking.

1132 E. Hastings St. ✆ **604/253-4316.** www.pinkpearl.com. Main courses C$12-C$35 (US$7.75-US$23); dim sum C$2.95-C$6 (US$1.90-US$3.90). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 9am-10pm. Bus: 10.

INEXPENSIVE

Incendio ★ *Finds* PIZZA If you're looking for something casual and local that won't be full of other people reading downtown maps, this little Gastown hideaway is sublime. The 22 pizza combinations are served on fresh, crispy crusts baked in an old wood-fired oven. Pastas are homemade, and you're encouraged to mix and match—try the mussels with spinach fettuccine, capers, and tomatoes in lime butter. The wine list is decent; the beer list is inspired. And now, there's a patio. Sunday night features all-you-can-eat pizza for C$8 (US$5.20). Much to the delight of Kitsilano residents a second location with a slightly larger menu has opened up next to the Fifth Avenue movie theatre at 2118 Burrard (✆ **604/736-2220**).

103 Columbia St. ✆ **604/688-8694.** Main courses C$8-C$12 (US$5.20-US$7.75). AE, MC, V. Mon-Thurs 11:30am-3pm and 5-10pm; Fri 11:30am-3pm and 5-11pm; Sat 5-11pm; Sun 4:30-10pm. Closed Dec 23-Jan 3. Bus: 1 or 8.

Phnom Penh Restaurant VIETNAMESE This family-run restaurant serves a mixture of Vietnamese and slightly spicier Cambodian cuisine. Phnom Penh is a perennial contender for, and occasional winner of, *Vancouver Magazine*'s award for the city's best Asian restaurant. The walls are adorned with artistic renderings of ancient Cambodia's capital, Angkor. Khmer dolls are suspended in glass cases, and the subdued lighting is a welcome departure from the harsh glare often found in inexpensive Chinatown restaurants. Try the outstanding hot-and-sour soup, loaded with prawns and lemongrass. The deep-fried garlic squid served with rice is also delicious. For dessert, the fruit-and-rice pudding is an exotic treat.

244 E. Georgia St., near Main St. ✆ **604/682-5777.** Dishes C$5.15-C$14 (US$3.30-US$9.10). AE, MC. Wed-Mon 10am-9pm. Bus: 8 or 19.

3 The West End

EXPENSIVE

Cin Cin ★★ MODERN ITALIAN Cin Cin is known almost as well for its patrons as for the food it serves. Celebrities, models, politicians, and tourists all frequent this second-story, villa-style bistro. But don't expect much attitude; the casual dining room surrounds an open kitchen, which is built around a huge

alderwood-fired oven. The heated terrace overlooking Robson Street is an equally pleasant dining and people-watching spot. Dishes range from elegant pastas and pizzas—capellini alla pomodoro, penne puttanesca, and pizza Margherita—to more substantial dishes such as rosemary-marinated rack of lamb, sea bass crusted with porcini mushrooms, and smoked chicken breast. The award-winning wine list is extensive, as is the selection of wines by the glass.

1154 Robson St. ✆ **604/688-7338.** www.cincin.net. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$16-C$32 (US$10-US$21). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Fri 11:30am-2:30pm; daily 5-11pm. Bus: 5 or 22.

Delilah's ✪✪ CONTINENTAL Walk down the steps from the Denman Place Mall and you've entered Delilah's French bordello of a room—red velvet chaise lounges, little private corner rooms, cherubim cavorting on the ceiling, and wall-mounted lamps with glass shades. First order of business is a martini—Delilah's forte, and the fuel firing the laughter and conversation all around. The two-page martini list comes with everything from the basic Boston Tea Partini (Citron vodka and iced tea in a glass with sugared rim and lemon wedge) to the ultimate in Southern excess, the Miranda (pineapple, vodka, and fresh floating fruit). The staff are brisk and helpful and run to the Miranda side—flamboyant, friendly, and over the top. The menu is seafood heavy, which Delilah's does well, sticking to freshness and simple sauces such as the seared jumbo scallops with saffron risotto or grilled swordfish with a sun-dried cherry-cranberry compote. The chef gets in a bit over his head with land-based fare, so go with the flow and order something from the sea.

1789 Comox St. ✆ **604/687-3424.** Reservations accepted for parties of 6 or more. Fixed-price menu C$24 (2 courses)-C$33.50 (4 courses) (US$15-US$22). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 5:30pm-midnight. Bus: 5 to Denman St.

The Fish House in Stanley Park ✪ SEAFOOD Reminiscent of a more genteel era, this white-clapboard clubhouse is surrounded by public tennis courts, bowling greens, and ancient cedar trees. Three rooms decorated in hunter green with dark wood and whitewashed accents reinforce the clubhouse atmosphere. The menu includes such innovative dishes as pan-seared Alaskan scallops with sweet chili glaze, lemongrass-crusted prawn satay, and a smoked-salmon sampler. The oyster bar has at least a half-dozen fresh varieties daily. The desserts are sumptuous. The restaurant/bar draws a mix of golfers, strollers, and local execs.

8901 Stanley Park Dr. ✆ **877/681-7275** or 604/681-7275. www.fishhousestanleypark.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$17-C$30 (US$11-US$19).

AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 11:30am-10pm; Sun 11am-10pm. Closed Dec 24-26. Bus: 1, 35, or 135.

Liliget Feast House & Catering ★ *Finds* WEST COAST The nondescript entrance gives no hint to the unique restaurant located downstairs from an East Indian restaurant. The dining room is filled with natural cedar columns rising from the water-worn stone floor; the tables are sunken into stone platforms around a central cedar-and-stone walkway. Recorded song-stories about potlatch ceremonies play in the background. The food is traditional West Coast First Nations fare. Appetizers include grilled oysters, clam fritters, grilled prawns, breaded and fried smelt, salmon or venison soup, and bannock (delicious fried bread). Entrees like sweet alder-smoked salmon, lightly smoked duck breast, and grilled marinated venison steak are sumptuous. Local side dishes include fiddleheads, sea asparagus, and wild rice. Available in various sizes, the "Potlatch Platters" are an ideal way to sample a bit of everything. For people curious about modern First Nations culture, this is one experience that shouldn't be missed.

1724 Davie St. ✆ **604/681-7044.** www.liliget.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$17-C$30 (US$11-US$19). Spring-fall daily 5-10pm; winter Wed-Sun 5-10pm. AE, DC, MC, V. Bus: 5.

Raincity Grill ★★ WEST COAST Raincity's room is long and low and hugs the shoreline, the better to let the evening sun pour in. With the location—by English Bay Beach—and the spacious patio, you wonder if the owner didn't have to kill for the spot. Then you realize he's paying off the view with volume—they do pack 'em in at Raincity, making dinner more of a social occasion than you may have wished for. Ah, but the view. And the food. Raincity's forte is local ingredients, West Coast style. That means appetizers of barbecued quail with a sage and goat-cheese polenta, crispy jumbo spot prawns, or a salad of smoked steelhead. Entrees include grilled Fraser Valley free-range chicken and fresh-caught spring salmon. And then there's the award-winning wine list. It's huge and, in keeping with the restaurant's theme, it sticks pretty close to home. Better yet, most varieties are available by the glass.

1193 Denman St. ✆ **604/685-7337.** www.raincitygrill.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$21-C$29 (US$14-US$19). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 5-10:30pm; Sat-Sun 10:30am-2:30pm. Bus: 1 or 5.

The Teahouse Restaurant ★ WEST COAST The best approach to the Teahouse, perched on Ferguson Point in Stanley Park overlooking English Bay, is on foot along the seawall from

English Bay (about a 30-min. walk from the Bay). Choose a sunny day, and arrive an hour before sunset so you can take in the magnificent views as you climb up the steps to the restaurant and get settled in with a glass of champagne. There are no bad seats but true sunset hounds may wish to reserve a window seat in the conservatory. If you can tear yourself away long enough to look at the menu you'll notice fresh local ingredients with an Asian twist. Appetizers include wok-fried squid with Thai chilies and oyster sauce and barbecue duck rolls with plum dipping sauce. Main courses lean heavily towards seafood, including B.C. salmon, seared scallops, and potato-crusted sea bass. The dishes are well done and beautifully presented, a fine companion to the spectacular setting. But even after the sun fades, the lights cast a magical glow on the trees and garden.

Ferguson Point, Stanley Park. ✆ **604/669-3281.** www.vancouverdine.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$19-C$29 (US$12-US$19). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 11:30am-2:30pm; Sun 10:30am-2:30pm; dinner daily 5-10pm. Afternoon tea Mon-Sat 2:30-4:30pm.

MODERATE

Kam's SINGAPORIAN Vancouver's downtown overflows with excellent Japanese fare, and cheap Chinese is a dime a dozen, but good, affordable Southeast Asian can be hard to come by. Thankfully, Kam's cooks up generous portions of tasty Singaporean cuisine. Relentless traders that they are, Singaporeans incorporated many flavors and dishes from surrounding nations, so Kam's varied menu includes such dishes as Indonesian-style *gado gado* (vegetable salad doused in peanut sauce) and *nasi goreng* (fried rice), Malaysian chicken sate, and numerous Thai curry dishes. A unique Singaporean dish that's perfect for warming up on rainy day is the spicy *laksa*, a rich broth with coconut milk, juicy chicken and prawns, and rice noodles. All dishes lean towards the spicy but can certainly be tamed upon request. Keep in mind that the portions are large; we recently dined with a group of six and were plenty stuffed sharing three appetizers and four main courses.

1043 Davie St. ✆ **604/669-3389.** Main courses C$8.50-C$13 (US$5.50-US$8.40). AE, MC, V. Mon-Fri 11am-2:40pm; Sat-Sun noon-2:40pm; daily 5-10pm. Bus: 5.

Romano's Macaroni Grill at the Mansion ★★ *Kids* FAMILY STYLE/ITALIAN Housed in a huge stone mansion built in the early 20th century by sugar baron B. T. Rogers, Romano's is fun and casual. Wood paneling, stained-glass windows, and chandeliers surround tables covered with red-and-white checked tablecloths. The menu is Southern Italian, and the pastas are definitely favorites. This

isn't high-concept Italian; the food is simple, understandable, and consistently good. You're charged for the house wine based on how much you pour from the bottle. Your kids will love the children's menu—which features lasagna and meat loaf as well as tasty pizzas—and the permissive staff that bursts into opera at the slightest provocation.

1523 Davie St. ✆ **604/689-4334.** Reservations recommended. Main courses C$8-C$16 (US$5.20-US$10); children's courses C$4.95-C$6 (US$3.20-US$3.90). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Thurs noon-10pm; Fri-Sat noon-11pm; Sun 11am-10pm. Bus: 5.

Tanpopo JAPANESE Occupying the second floor of a corner building on Denman Street, Tanpopo has a partial view of English Bay, a large patio, and a huge menu of hot and cold Japanese dishes. But the line of people waiting 30 minutes or more every night for a table are here for the all-you-can-eat sushi. The unlimited fare includes the standards—makis, tuna and salmon sashimi, California and B.C. rolls—as well as cooked items such as tonkatsu, tempura, chicken kara-age, and broiled oysters. There are a couple of secrets to getting seated. You might try to call ahead, but they take only an arbitrary percentage of reservations for dinner each day. Otherwise, you can ask to sit at the sushi bar.

1122 Denman St. ✆ **604/681-7777.** Reservations recommended for groups. Main courses C$7-C$19 (US$4.50-US$12). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily Sun-Thurs 11:30am-10pm; Fri-Sat 11:30am-11pm. Bus: 5.

Zin's ★ CASUAL Located on Vancouver's Robson-street fashion heartland, Zin's made quite a splash when it opened, if only for its interior: an ultra-modern combination of black floors and purple, orange, and red walls and furnishings, the hard edges tempered by gauze curtains and lots of flickering candles in funky holders. The other reason behind the Zin's buzz was its creation of a new concept: taste tripping. Zin's takes you on a food trip around the globe, dish by dish. Unlike fusion, where flavors from all over the world arrived together on one plate, with taste tripping, the global dishes arrive chastely one after the other. Zin's chef may start you off with a grilled *naan* bread and mint tomato chutney or maybe a pure and unadulterated spicy Thai soup. For the main course you could go for a French goat cheese fondue (served with baguettes for dipping) or a Malaysian *laksa* seafood stew in coconut broth. Still not tired of traveling? Try the rich and creamy vegetable risotto, served with mesclun greens, a Parmesan crisp, and a pesto vinaigrette. For your safety and dining comfort, Zin's chef maintains the integrity of each

cuisine and the quality of each dish throughout the culinary voyage. Every month the chef also pauses at a specific destination, offering a number of specials representative of the local cuisine. For casual dining the wine list is one of the best, with nearly 50 wines by the glass and the best selection of zinfandels in town.

1277 Robson St. ✆ **604/408-1700.** www.zin-restaurant.com. Main courses C$11-C$17 (US$7.10-US$11). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Wed 7am-midnight; Thurs-Sat 7am-1am; Sun 8am-11pm.

INEXPENSIVE

Gyoza King JAPANESE Gyoza King features an entire menu of *gyoza*—succulent Japanese dumplings filled with prawns, pork, vegetables, and other combinations—as well as Japanese noodles and staples like *katsu-don* (pork cutlet over rice) and *o-den* (a rich, hearty soup). This is the gathering spot for hordes of young Japanese visitors looking for cheap eats that still approximate home cooking. Seating is divided among Western-style tables, the bar (where you can watch the chef in action), and the Japanese-style low table, which is reserved for larger groups if the restaurant is busy. The staff is very courteous and happy to explain the dishes.

1508 Robson St. ✆ **604/669-8278.** Main courses C$6-C$13 (US$3.90-US$8.40). AE, MC, V. Sat-Sun 11:30am-3pm; Mon-Sat 5:30pm-2am; Sun 5:30pm-midnight. Bus: 5.

Rooster's Quarters *Kids* CANADIAN/FAMILY-STYLE Rooster's Quarters offers the antidote to diet food. Succulent baby back ribs are served in a sweet-and-tangy maple barbecue sauce, and the Québec-style barbecued chicken is crisp on the outside, tender and juicy on the inside. If those don't hit the spot, try the *poutine,* a Québec dish of french fries covered with melted curd cheese and brown gravy. The atmosphere is as casual as the menu, making Rooster's a great place to bring the kids. True, it can get a little crowded, but just pick out a table and seat yourself if there is no line. That's what the regulars do.

836 Denman St. ✆ **604/689-8023.** Dishes C$8-C$16 (US$5.20-US$10). AE, MC, V. Daily 11am-11pm. Bus: 5.

Stephos *Value* GREEK A fixture on the Davie St. dining scene, Stephos has been packing them in since Zorba was a boy. The cuisine is simple Greek fare at its finest and cheapest. Customers line up outside for a seat amid Greek travel posters, potted ivy, and whitewashed walls (the average wait is about 10-15 min., but it could be as long as 30 min.). Once you're inside, the staff will never rush you out the door. Order some pita and dip (hummus, spicy eggplant, or garlic spread)

while you peruse the menu. An interesting appetizer is the *avgolemono* soup, a delicately flavored chicken broth with egg and lemon, accompanied by a plate of piping hot pita bread. When choosing a main course, keep in mind that portions are huge. The roasted lamb, lamb chops, fried calamari, and a variety of souvlaki are served with rice, roast potatoes, and Greek salad. The beef, lamb, or chicken pita come in slightly smaller portions served with fries and *tzatziki* (garlic sauce).

1124 Davie St. ✆ **604/683-2555.** Reservations accepted for parties of 5 or more. Main courses C$4.25-C$10 (US$2.75-US$6.45). AE, MC, V. Daily 11:30am-11:30pm. Bus: 5.

4 The West Side

VERY EXPENSIVE

Bishop's ★★★ PACIFIC NORTHWEST Whether you arrive on foot or by limousine (there are guests in both categories), owner John Bishop will greet you at the door and lead you to a table in his elegant dining room hung with fine paintings and wood sculpture from the Pacific Northwest. Like the art work, all ingredients are top-quality and locally grown, not to mention organic. Everything is seasonal, and the menu changes weekly, but at any given time Bishop's will have a small collection of the best Pacific Northwest dishes available—anywhere. Appetizers might include grilled spot prawns with fennel and blood orange, or Salt Spring Island goat cheese coated with toasted hazelnuts in a raspberry vinaigrette. Entrees could include roasted rack of suckling pig, or roasted wild spring salmon with rhubarb compote. The wine selection isn't huge—there simply isn't the space—but it's exceptionally well chosen with vintages from along the Pacific Coast. If you plan on splurging one night, this is one of the best places to do it.

2183 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/738-2025.** www.bishopsonline.com. Reservations required. Main courses C$28-C$36 (US$18-US$23). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 5:30-11pm; Sun 5:30-10pm. Closed Jan 1-15. Bus: 4 or 7.

Lumière ★★★ FRENCH The success of this French dining experiment in the heart of Kitsilano has turned chef Rob Feenie into a hot commodity. He now regularly jets off to New York to teach folks back east how to do it right. And how's that? Preparation and presentation are immaculately French, while ingredients are resolutely local, which makes for interesting surprises—fresh local ginger with the veal, or raspberries in the foie gras. Lumière's tasting menus are a series of 8 or 10 delightful plates that change with the season, perfectly matched to a local wine (not included in the fixed

price) and gorgeously presented. Diners simply choose one of the four tasting menus (one menu is vegetarian) and then sit back and let the pilots in Lumière's kitchen take them on a culinary journey they won't forget. If you can afford it, it's a voyage you shouldn't miss.

2551 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/739-8185.** Reservations recommended. Tasting menu (8 courses) C$60-C$100 (US$39-US$65). AE, DC, MC, V. Tues-Sun 5:30-9:30pm. Bus: 9 or 10.

Lumière Tasting Bar ★★★ FRENCH The darling of foodies across the continent, Rob Feenie is not one to sit still. After the success of Lumière (see above) he recently opened up Lumière Tasting Bar, where patrons may sample just a few dishes instead of committing to the full seven-course meal. He serves these tasty little confections for C$12 (US$7.75) a plate, which is a steal considering Feenie hasn't compromised on quality or taste. On a recent visit we sampled seared sablefish with a sauté of potatoes and leeks and an ahi tuna with a cucumber salad and chili-lime dressing. The confit of lamb shoulder was fall-off-the-bone tender and was accompanied by a tasty ratatouille. Also outstanding were the short ribs served in a mushroom broth with *shimeji* (Japanese mushrooms). Vegetarians will find fewer options than in the restaurant, but fish and meat lovers will find plenty to rave about.

2551 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/739-8185.** www.lumiere.ca. Reservations not accepted. All dishes C$12 (US$7.75). AE, DC, MC, V. Tues-Sun 5:30-11pm. Bus: 9 or 10.

Tojo's Restaurant ★★ JAPANESE I had never met Hideki Tojo, or even tried his cooking, until one afternoon at Vancouver's first-ever sumo wrestling demonstration, a diminutive man on the tatami mat next to me lifted up a bento box and proffered a tray of delicate sushi rolls. As two thunderous giants eyed each other in the ring, I picked out a piece with fresh salmon and popped it in my mouth. Incredible. A thousand pounds of screaming human flesh were smashing each other in the ring, but my attention was entirely captured by the exquisite flavors exploding in my mouth. Back in Tojo's modest sushi bar, the ever-changing menu offers such specialties as sea urchin on the half shell, herring roe, lobster claws, tuna, crab, and asparagus. I'd like to say I've since become a regular, but at the prices Tojo charges for his creations, regulars are either film stars or fully mortgaged for the next seven generations. Still, it's a wonderful splurge.

202-777 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/872-8050.** Reservations recommended. Full dinners C$23-C$100 (US$15-US$65). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 5-10:30pm. Closed Christmas week. Bus: 9.

EXPENSIVE

Ouest ★★ FRENCH The word out West is *contemporary.* The decor of this west-side eatery is a showcase of what Modern looks like at the start of the new millennium: crisp, clean, and (unlike stripped down '70s functionalism) unafraid to make use of the finest materials in pursuit of an understated elegance. The contemporary French cuisine follows a similar philosophy: Top-quality ingredients are judiciously paired with only enough seasoning or sauce to express their natural flavors. Call it the less-is-more approach to French cuisine. Starters to look for include the parfait of foie gras and chicken livers with Okanagan apple jelly, or the fricassee of escargot and wild mushrooms. Mains to remember include corn-fed chicken with morels and wild rice or pan-fried halibut with mushroom crust and baby leeks. Perhaps the best option, however, is to put yourself in the chef's capable hands and choose the seven-course menu gourmand (C$89/US$57). The selection of wines by the glass is disappointingly limited here, but there is a good selection of half-bottles. The service is excellent.

2881 Granville St. ✆ **604/738-8938.** www.ouestrestaurant.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$28-C$37 (US$19-US$24). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 5:30pm-11pm. Bus: 8.

The Smoking Dog ★ FRENCH To date, the little Kitsilano neighborhood of Yorkville Mews has remained a local secret, perhaps because the few tourists who do venture into this delightful one-block stretch are immediately confronted with a confusing variety of choices. Should one stop at one of the three cafes, the tapas bar, the sushi spot, the vegan cafe, or this traditional Parisian bistro, complete with patio umbrellas, obsequious waiters dressed in black, and a friendly bear of an owner who greets everyone at the door? Food-wise, the Dog is undoubtedly the best (and priciest) of the lot, featuring New York pepper steak, grilled halibut with Pernod sauce, and scallops with beurre blanc. If the weather allows, grab a spot on the heated patio and enjoy the bustling street life.

1889 W. First Ave. ✆ **604/732-8811.** Reservations accepted. Main courses C$22-C$30 (US$14-US$19). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Fri 11:30am-3pm; Mon-Sat 5:30-10:30pm. Bus: 2 or 22.

MODERATE

Cactus Club Café *Value* TEX MEX/SOUTHWESTERN/CASUAL So it's not fine dining. That's not why you're here. The crowd is young, the room is fun, the beer is cold, and the waitresses invariably beautiful. Dinner almost always starts at the bar, 'cause

there's always a line and they don't take reservations. Hang out, have a beer and some calamari, hot wings, or potato skins. When you finally reach your table, the food is consistently good—sizzling fajitas, six variations of Caesar salad, slow-cooked Jamaican-style jerk chicken, and succulent barbecued ribs.

1530 Broadway at Granville ✆ **604/687-3278.** (Also 1136 Robson St. and other locations.) Main courses C$6-C$19 (US$3.90-US$12). AE, MC, V. Daily 11am-midnight (later in the summer). Bus: 9 or 10.

The Cat's Meow CASUAL Locals may be unfamiliar with the Cat's Meow, but tell them it's where Isadora's used to be and their eyes light up. The long-running cooperative restaurant was missed when it finally closed. Fortunately, the Cat's Meow has done a good job filling the delightful room and patio by providing tasty, affordable sandwiches, burgers, pizzas, and pastas. Appetizers such as crab cakes and salmon canapés perfectly match a beer on a sunny day. The back patio overlooks a water-play area, where kids can frolic in the sprinklers and fountains. Later in the evening kids and parents give way to a younger crowd.

1540 Old Bridge St., Granville Island. ✆ **604/647-2287.** www.thecatsmeow.ca. Main courses C$8-C$19 (US$5.20-US$12). AE, MC, V. Mon-Wed 9:30am-midnight; Thurs-Sat 9:30am-1am; Sun 9:30am-11pm. Bus: 50.

Café Zen CASUAL Sandal-clad traffic from next-door Kits Beach has turned the stretch of Yew Street between Cornwall and Second avenues into something of a casual dining mecca. There are numerous pasta options, a couple of pubs, and several neighborhood restaurants, one of the more popular of which is Café Zen. A great breakfast and lunch spot anytime of the week, on weekends this little cafe develops positively un-Zen-like bustle. By 10am the dining room is packed and waiting guests spill out the doorway and up the long steep sidewalk. What's the attraction? A huge brunch menu, fast and efficient service, reasonable prices, and the best Eggs Benny in town.

1631 Yew St. (at York). ✆ **604/731-4018.** Main courses C$6-C$12 (US$3.90-US$7.75). MC, V. Daily 7am-5pm. Bus: 2, 4, 7, or 22.

Dockside Brewing Company ★ *Finds* CASUAL One of the city's best patios is tucked away on the far side of Granville Island, inside the Granville Island Hotel. Overlooking False Creek's bustling seawall and Marina, the Dockside Brewing Company offers the perfect urban retreat and on less than patio-perfect days, the restaurant offers terrific views, too. The on-site microbrewery produces an

excellent selection of seasonal beers (order the six-beer sampler to determine your favorite) and the recently revamped kitchen serves up tasty Asian-inspired food. Perfect as a snack or appetizer are the tiger prawns or chili squid, lightly grilled and generously sprinkled with garlic, ginger and lemon grass. Main courses include pizzas, made from scratch and baked in the wood-burning oven and affordable pastas; for a kick try the penne Calabrese with Italian sausage, red peppers, and spicy tomato sauce. Other menu highlights include seafood entrees such as Cajun-spiced snapper with mango salsa, herb crusted halibut with lemon beurre blanc, and alder-grilled salmon; all are served with a generous helping of rice pilaf and seasonal grilled vegetables. The wine list showcases a number of fine Okanagan wines at very reasonable prices. The lunch menu also includes a selection of sandwiches, burgers, and wraps.

1253 Johnstone St., Granville Island. ✆ **604/685-7070.** Reservations recommended for large groups. Main courses C$12-C$24 (US$7.75-US$15). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 11:30am-10pm (bar stays open later). Bus: 50 or Aquabus.

Mark's Fiasco *Kids* STEAK/CASUAL Mark's is the casual pub of choice for the Kitsilano jock-boy crowd, with a brass bar, 15 microbrews on tap, and at least four channels of sports on strategically placed TVs. On the restaurant side, Mark's offers a well-rounded menu of pastas, pizzas, seafood, and meat dishes. Appetizers include steamed mussels, fried calamari, and a delicious baked spinach dip. With a burger and fries starting at C$7 (US$4.50), crayons on every paper-covered table, and a congenial staff, Mark's is also kid-friendly.

2468 Bayswater St. (at W. Broadway). ✆ **604/734-1325.** www.markjamesgroup.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$7-C$19 (US$4.50-US$12). AE, MC, V. Daily 11:45am-11pm (bar stays open later). Bus: 9.

Sami's ★★ *Finds* INDIAN Always in the running for best Indian food in Vancouver, Sami's is still going strong. For a short time there was a second, downtown location, but that restaurant left the warm nest of chef Sami Lalji and went off in its own direction. This means that those wanting to try the original fabulous East-meets-West South Asian cooking will have to make the trip out to a strip mall off West Broadway again. But the food is worth the journey, offering inventive and delicious dishes—try the Mumbai-blackened New York steak set atop spiked mashers with blueberry coriander jus—that won't put a large hole in your wallet. Service is efficient and knowledgeable. No reservations accepted; expect a line.

986 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/736-8330.** Reservations not accepted. Main courses C$12 (US$7.75). DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 11:30am-2:30pm; daily 5-11pm. Bus: 9.

The SandBar ✪✪ CASUAL Fridays and Saturdays the bar and patio become refuges for the dolled up and decked out as 20-something singles, rebounding baby boomers, and long-toothed cougars all head out on the prowl. Those who are not ready to tear into the pickup scene can actually sink their teeth into a number of fairly decent tapas, perfect for sharing with a couple of friends. The mussels and clams come wonderfully steamed, positively demanding that one sop up the juices with some warm bits of bread. Shrimp and pork pot stickers or dumplings provide the Asian component of a menu that spans the globe. Mexican-inspired fishcakes are served with a pineapple salsa, while fish taquitos come with a chipotle dip sauce. The menu also offers a number of main courses, including cedar-planked grilled salmon and a daily pasta special that in season may feature fresh B.C. scallops in a light tomato sauce. In summer the patio on the third floor is fabulous for lazing about in the warm sunshine, while come fall or winter it's a good spot to cuddle up beneath a heat lamp in the big leather chair. Be nice to your greeter, and she may show you the way.

1535 Johnston St., Granville Island. ✆ **604/669-9030.** www.mysandbar.com. Reservations not accepted for patio. Tapas C$5.75-C$12 (US$3.70-US$7.80); main courses C$10-C$20 (US$6.45-US$13). AE, MC, V. Daily 11am-midnight; kitchen may close at 10:30pm. Bus: 50 to Granville Island.

Vij's ✪ INDIAN Vij doesn't take reservations, but then he really doesn't have to: There's a line outside his door every single night. Patrons huddled under Vij's violet neon sign are treated to complimentary tea and *papadums.* For a few dollars more, an Indian Pale Ale (IPA) can be rustled up to help soothe the wait. Inside, the decor is as warm and subtle as the seasonings, which are all roasted and ground by hand, then used with studied delicacy. The menu changes monthly, though some of the more popular entrees remain constants. Recent offerings included coconut curried chicken and saffron rice and marinated pork medallions with garlic-yogurt curry and *naan* (flat bread). Vegetarian selections abound, including curried vegetable rice pilaf with cilantro cream sauce and Indian lentils with naan and *raita* (yogurt-mint sauce). The wine and beer list is short but carefully selected. And for teetotalers, Vij has developed a souped-up version of the traditional Indian chai, the chaiuccino.

1480 W. 11th Ave. ✆ **604/736-6664.** Fax 604/736-3701. Reservations not accepted. Main courses C$14-C$24 (US$9.10-US$15). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 5:30-10pm, later if busy. Closed Dec 24-Jan 8. Bus: 8 or 10.

INEXPENSIVE

Annapurna ★★ *Value* INDIAN/VEGETARIAN Annapurna gets my vote as Vancouver's best vegetarian restaurant, and it's up there in the running for best Indian as well. A Kitsilano favorite, the restaurant's small dining room is hung with dozens of rice-paper lamps in whites, yellows, oranges, and reds that, when combined with the mirrors, bask the room in a soft, warm glow. The menu is all vegetarian, but with the amazing combinations of Indian spices, herbs, and local vegetables, the dishes are rich and satisfying. Appetizers include samosas, pakoras, and lentil dumplings soaked in tangy yogurt with chutney. A variety of breads, such as paratha, naans, and chapatis, are served piping hot. Entrees such as *aloo-ghobi* (potato curry with cauliflower, onions, and cilantro) or *navrattan korma* (seasonal vegetables simmered in poppy-seed paste, flavored with saffron, aniseed, and sliced almonds) can be prepared from mild to screaming hot. The wine list is small but very reasonably priced. With food, wine, and atmosphere this good, Annapurna lets you feel like you're splurging when you're not.

1812 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/736-5959.** Main courses C$10-C$11 (US$6.45-US$7.10). AE, MC, V. Daily 11:30am-10pm. Bus: 4 or 7.

The Naam Restaurant ★ *Kids* VEGETARIAN Back in the sixties, when Kitsilano was Canada's hippie haven, the Naam was tie-dye central. Things have changed a tad since then, but Vancouver's oldest vegetarian and natural-food restaurant retains a pleasant granola feel. The decor is simple, earnest, and welcoming: well-worn wooden tables and chairs, plants, an assortment of local art, and a fabulous garden patio. The brazenly healthy fare ranges from all-vegetarian burgers, enchiladas, and burritos to tofu teriyaki, Thai noodles, and a variety of pita pizzas. The sesame spice fries are a Vancouver institution. And though the Naam is not quite vegan, they do cater to the anti-egg-and-cheese crowd with specialties like the macrobiotic Dragon Bowl of brown rice, tofu, peanut sauce, sprouts, and steamed vegetables. As with all Naam dishes, quality is excellent. The only real trick is to arrive well before you're actually hungry. Serving staff will invariably disappear on an extended search for personal fulfillment at some point during your meal.

2724 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/738-7151.** www.thenaam.com. Reservations accepted on weekdays only. Main courses C$4.95-C$10 (US$3.20-US$6.50). AE, MC, V. Daily 24 hr. Live music every night 7-10pm. Bus: 4 or 22.

Shao Lin Noodle Restaurant *Kids* CHINESE/DIM SUM Ever wonder how fresh your noodles really are? At Shao Lin you can watch the noodle chef make them right before your eyes. Unique for

Vancouver, Shao Lin is one of the few places where, behind a glass enclosure, each order of noodles is made from scratch. The chefs mix, knead, toss, stretch, and compress the dough until it almost magically gives way to thin strands. After a quick boil, the noodles are added to the dish of your choice. Two or three dishes make a satisfying meal for two; choose from a wide variety of meat and vegetable dishes. Want more entertainment at your table? Order the special tea and watch the server pour it from a 3-foot-long pot originally designed to allow male servants to maintain a polite distance from an 18th-century Chinese empress. Watch the server's steady hand as he aims the spout of boiling water in the center of your tiny cup—just don't make any sudden movements.

548 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/873-1816.** Main courses C$5-C$10 (US$3.25-US$6.50). No credit cards. Mon-Fri 11am-3pm; Sat-Sun 11:30am-3:30pm; daily 5-9:30pm. Bus: 9.

Sophie's Cosmic Café *Kids* FAMILY-STYLE/AMERICAN Sophie's is readily identifiable by the giant silver knife and fork bolted to the storefront. Inside, every available space has been crammed with toys and knickknacks from the 1950s and 1960s, creating an experience much akin to having lunch inside a McDonald's Happy Meal. For that very reason, children are inordinately fond of Sophie's. Crayons and coloring paper are always on hand. The menu is simple: pastas, burgers and fries, great milkshakes, and a few classic Mexican dishes. The slightly spicy breakfast menu is hugely popular with Kitsilano locals, lines can stretch to half an hour or more on post-hangover Sunday mornings.

2095 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/732-6810.** Main courses C$4.85-C$17 (US$3.15-US$11). MC, V. Daily 8am-9:30pm. Bus: 4 or 7.

5 The East Side

Many of these "east side" restaurants are on Main Street, which is on the borderlands between upscale west and working-class east. Main thus has some funky urban authenticity to go with its ever-increasing trendiness.

EXPENSIVE

Sun Sui Wah ★★ *Kids* CHINESE/DIM SUM/SEAFOOD One of the most elegant and sophisticated Chinese restaurants in town, the award-winning Sun Sui Wah is well known for its seafood. Fresh and varied, the catch of the day can include fresh crab, rock cod, geoduck, scallops, abalone, oyster, prawns, and more. Pick your own from the tank or order from the menu if you'd rather not meet your

food eye-to-eye before it's cooked. The staff is quite helpful for those unfamiliar with the cuisine. Dim sum is a treat, with the emphasis on seafood. Just point and choose. For land lovers and vegetarians, there are plenty of other choices, though they are missing out on one of the best seafood feasts in town.

3888 Main St. ✆ **604/872-8822.** www.sunsuiwah.com. Also in Richmond: 102 Alderbridge Place, 4940 No. 3 Rd. (✆ **604/273-8208**). Reservations accepted. Main courses C$11-C$50 (US$7.15-US$32). AE, DC, MC, V. Daily 10:30am-3pm and 5-10:30pm. Bus: 3.

MODERATE

The Brickhouse Bistro ★★ *Value* BISTRO There were once two partners who opened a bar in a slightly seedy part of town. It ought to do well, they reasoned, for there are many with money here, who have recently bought condos and have nowhere to drink. And do well it did. Encouraged, the partners refurbished the room above their successful bar, and opened a bistro—a casual, funky place, all bricks and wood beams. They hired a chef capable of cooking simple but superior food, dishes like New Zealand rib eye in Madeira jus or specials of fresh fish. To lure customers, the partners kept prices very low. A selection of B.C. wines was also available, at two-thirds the price charged by other bistros. Word of the cuisine and ambience has spread far and wide, so that dinner on a weekend is a pleasant social affair. But the Brickhouse is still a tasty steal.

730 Main St. ✆ **604/689-8645.** Reservations accepted. Main courses C$10-C$16 (US$6.50-US$10). MC, V. Tues-Thurs 6pm-midnight; Fri-Sat 6pm-1am. Bus: 3.

Bukowski's BISTRO/WEST COAST/CASUAL The last and booziest of the American Beat poets gets what he always wanted, a bistro named in his honor. So what if he never made it to Vancouver, much less the Bohemian-and-becoming-more-so strip on Commercial Drive. The cuisine is not Polish, but instead a fusion-y kind of comfort food perfectly suited to casual dining. Think beef satay, charbroiled chicken on focaccia bread, catfish with black-bean salsa, or steak with peppercorn garlic jus. And beer. Or any one of several wines featured on a daily blackboard. Even more attractive than the food is the friendly, buzzing atmosphere and a clientele slightly too rich to really be artists, but hip enough to dress the part. Service is wonderfully unhurried. Dawdle for hours if you will, reading the snippets of Sylvia Plath inscribed on your table.

1447 Commercial Dr. ✆ **604/253-4770.** Reservations accepted. Main courses C$8-C$15 (US$5.20-US$9.75). MC, V. Mon-Thurs 5pm-1am; Fri-Sat noon-1am; Sun noon-midnight. Live Jazz Mon-Thurs. Bus: 20.

The Locus Café CASUAL/TEX-MEX/SOUTHWESTERN Even if you arrive on your lonesome, you'll have plenty of friends soon enough—the Locus is a cheek-by-jowl kind of place, filled with a friendly, funky crowd of artsy Mount Pleasant types. A big bar dominates the room, overhung with "swamp-gothic" lacquer trees and surrounded by a tier of stools with booths and tiny tables farther out. Cuisine originated in the American Southwest but picked up an edge somewhere along the way, demonstrated in the roasted half-chicken with a cumin-coriander crust and sambuca citrus demi-glace. Keep an eye out for fish specials, such as grilled tomba tuna with a grapefruit and mango glaze. The pan-seared calamari makes a perfect appetizer. Bowen Island brewery provides the beer, so quality's high. Your only real problem is catching the eye of the hyper-busy bartender.

4121 Main St. ✆ **604/708-4121.** Reservations recommended. Main courses C$9-C$15 (US$5.85-US$9.75). MC, V. Mon-Sat 11am-1:30am; Sun 11am-midnight. Bus: 3.

The Reef ★★ *Value* CARIBBEAN The "JERK" in the phone number refers neither to the Steve Martin film nor to the guy two cubicles down from you at the office, but rather to a spicy marinade: bay leaves, scotch bonnets, allspice, garlic, soya, green onions, vinegar, and cloves. The result is piquant, scrumptious chicken. The Reef serves up a number of jerk dishes, including their signature quarter jerk chicken breast. Other dishes are equally delightful, including a tropical salad of fresh mango, red onions, and tomatoes; shrimp with coconut milk and lime juice; grilled blue marlin; and Trenton spiced ribs. Choose a glass of wine from the thoughtfully selected list, and you have gourmet dining in a great room—cleverly decorated with chicken wire, bamboo, and original mixed media artwork—at a bargain price. Afternoons, the tiny patio is drenched in sunlight, while in the evenings a DJ spins the sounds of the Islands.

4172 Main St. ✆ **604/874-JERK.** www.thereefrestaurant.com. Reservations ac-cepted. Main courses C$9-C$15 (US$5.85-US$9.75). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Fri 11am-midnight; Sat 10am-1am; Sun 10am-midnight. Bus: 3.

6 The North Shore

EXPENSIVE

The Beach House at Dundarave Pier ★★ WEST COAST Set on a dramatic waterfront location, the House offers a panoramic view of English Bay. Those on the heated patio also get sunshine, but they miss out on the rich interior of this restored 1912 teahouse. The food is consistently good—innovative, but not so experimental

that it leaves the staid West Van burghers gasping for breath. Appetizers include soft-shell crab with salt-and-fire jelly; grilled scallops with baby spinach, crispy onions, and red-pepper cream; and grilled portobello mushroom with Okanagan Valley goat cheese. Entrees have included garlic-crusted rack of lamb with honey balsamic glaze and baked striped sea bass with basil mousse and rock prawns. The wine list is award winning.

150 25th St., West Vancouver. ✆ **604/922-1414.** www.beachhousewestvan.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses C$12-C$16 (US$7.80-US$10) lunch, C$17-C$29 (US$11-US$19) dinner. AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 11am-3pm; Sun brunch 10:30am-3pm; Sun-Thurs 5-10pm; Fri-Sat 5-11pm. Light appetizers served 3-5pm. Bus: 255 to Ambleside Pier.

Gusto ★★★ ITALIAN West Vancouverites have always had numerous fine dining options, but for folks in more working-class North Vancouver (to the east of the Lion's Gate Bridge) times were always tougher. That is until the father-and-son Corsis team opened Gusto just steps from the Lonsdale Quay SeaBus Terminal. The Corsis family has done a fabulous job in creating a comfortable and pleasant dining room: it's bathed in warm earth tones and a rustic decor. However they truly outdid themselves with the menu, focusing on the cuisine from their native Central Italy. To start, order a glass of Italian bubbly and try the bocconcini wrapped in prosciutto and drizzled with cherry vinaigrette or the grilled calamari in a tomato coulis. Signature main courses include pistachio-crusted sea bass; duck breast with chanterelles and butternut squash confit; and the outstanding spaghetti quattro, a spicy concoction of minced chicken, black beans, garlic, and chili. Stuffed pastas are made from scratch; the mushroom agnolotti with truffle and cream sauce melts in your mouth. The wine list leans heavily to Bella Italia offering a good selection of reasonably priced Chianti and other table wines. There are also a number of limited editions merlots, cabernets, and zinfandels. Finally, save space at the end for the *pera cotta,* a port-poached pear served with pistachio gelato.

1 Lonsdale Ave., North Vancouver. ✆ **604/924-4444.** www.quattrorestaurants.com. Reservations recommended. Dinner main courses C$16-C$32 (US$10 -US$21); lunch C$9-C$17 (US$5.80-US$11) AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 11am-3pm; Sun brunch 10:30am-3pm; Sun-Thurs 5-10pm; Fri-Sat 5-11pm. Seabus to Lonsdale Quay.

The Salmon House on the Hill ★ WEST COAST/SEAFOOD High above West Vancouver, the Salmon House offers a spectacular view of the city and Burrard Inlet. The rough-hewn cedar walls are adorned with a growing collection of indigenous West Coast art. Chef Dan Atkinson's menu reflects his extensive research into local

ingredients and First Nations cuisine. An alderwood-fired grill dominates the kitchen, lending a delicious flavor to many of the dishes. To start, we recommend the Salmon House Sampler, featuring smoked and candied salmon, accompanied by fresh salsas, chutneys, and relishes. Entrees include a Japanese-style sesame-crusted tuna in a mustard and wasabi sauce, and a rum-and-maple-syrup-marinated salmon topped with a vanilla bean and pineapple salsa. Desserts bear little resemblance to early First Nations cuisine: mocha torte with pecan-toffee crust, blueberry tiramisu. The wine list earned an award of excellence from *Wine Spectator*.

2229 Folkstone Way, West Vancouver. ✆ **604/926-3212.** www.salmonhouse.com. Reservations recommended for dinner. Lunch main courses C$11.25-C$15 (US$7.25-US$9.70); dinner main courses C$18-C$30 (US$12-US$19). AE, DC, MC, V. Mon-Sat 11:30am-2:30pm; Sun brunch 11am-2:30pm; Sun-Thurs 5-10pm; Fri-Sat 5-10:30pm. Bus: 251 to Queens St.

INEXPENSIVE

The Tomahawk Restaurant ★ *Finds* FAMILY STYLE/AMERICAN Just a typical American-style diner, but with one critical difference that makes it worth a visit. The Tomahawk is wall-to-wall and roof-beam tall with Native knickknacks and gewgaws and some truly first-class First Nations art. It all started back in the 1930s when proprietor Chick Chamberlain began accepting carvings from Burrard Band Natives in lieu of payment. Over the years the collection just kept growing. So how's the food? Good, in a burgers-and-fries kind of way. Portions are large, burgers are tasty, and milkshakes come so thick the spoon stands up straight like a totem pole.

1550 Philip Ave., North Vancouver. ✆ **604/988-2612.** Reservations not accepted. Main courses C$4.25-C$17 (US$2.75-US$11). AE, DC, MC, V. Sun-Thurs 8am-9pm; Fri-Sat 8am-10pm. Bus: 239 to Philip Ave.

7 Coffee, Sweets & Ice Cream

Caffè Artigiano ★ *Finds* When a friend of a friend told me Caffè Artigiano's lattes were *absolutely* the best in town, I shrugged them off as just another Vancouver coffee snob talking up their daily java the way some discuss fine wine. Later, however, when I found myself walking by the small shop on the corner of West Pender, I thought I'd give it a try to see what all the hoopla was about. Watching owners Vince or Sammy at work, one discovers instantly that this is no ordinary joe. The trick is to start with the perfect beans, brew the coffee to an exact temperature, give the steamed milk the respect it deserves, and pour it out ever so slowly forming a perfect leaf shaped pattern in your handmade ceramic cup. This is

Caffeine Nation

"I've never seen so much coffee in all my life. The whole town is on a caffeine jag," said Bette Midler, when she performed in Vancouver.

Though the population had been softened up to the idea by a generation of Italian immigrants, the recent fine-coffee explosion started first in our sister city to the south. There are now more than 60 of the Seattle-based **Starbucks** shops in the city, as well as Blenz, Roastmasters, and other chain cafes. The Starbucks franchises facing each other on Robson and Thurlow are famed for the movie stars who drop in and the regular crowd of bikers who sit sipping lattes on their hogs. The city's best java joint—fittingly enough—is **Vancouver's Best Coffee,** 2959 W. Fourth Ave. (✆ **604/739-2136**), on a slightly funky section of West Fourth Avenue at Bayswater.

Nearly as good and far more politically correct is **Joe's Cafe,** 1150 Commercial Dr. (✆ **604/255-1046**), in the heart of the immigrant- and activist-laden Commercial Drive area. Lesbian activists, Marxist intellectuals, Guatemalan immigrants, and little old Portuguese men all sit and sip their cappuccinos together peacefully.

latte making elevated to an art form. And the taste! With a nose of finest Arabia, an elegant body of deepest ebony, this coffee dances flittingly across your tongue leaving barest hints of subtle mocha and a soupçon of flavor from the Eastern African hills.

1101 West Pender St. ✆ **604/685-5333.** www.caffeartigiano.com. Sweets and sandwiches under C$7 (US$4.55). Mon-Fri 7am-7pm. Closed Sat-Sun. Bus: 22 to Burrard and West Pender.

Death by Chocolate ★ If your idea of heaven includes rich desserts, then Death by Chocolate is the place to get dispatched. The large menu comes with photographs, but beware: Objects on the page may appear smaller than they are; sharing is encouraged. Some of the tested favorites include: Simply Irresistible, chocolate pudding with fudge center, covered in chocolate sauce; and Devil in Disguise, mocha fudge ice cream in Kahlúa chocolate sauce. Guilt-prone types can salve their consciences with more wholesome, fruitier desserts. Hell-bent ultra-chocoholics, on the other hand, should order up a Multitude of Sins: chocolate cake, chocolate

mousse, chocolate crepes stuffed with fruit, chocolate sauce, and, well, you get the idea.

Various locations, including 1001 Denman St. ✆ **604/899-CHOC,** and 1598 W. Broadway, ✆ **604/730-CHOC.** www.deathbychocolate.ca. C$4.95-C$11 (US$3.22-US$7.15). AE, MC, V. Generally open until midnight; hr. vary at each location.

Epicurean Delicatessen Caffè *Finds* A real Italian *caffè* in Kitsilano, the Epicurean brews a mean espresso. Locals and visitors flock to this tiny neighborhood deli, packing the sidewalk spots on nice days or the cozy small tables inside when the weather turns gray. Italian sweets, biscotti, and sorbet go well with any of the coffees, but for a savory treat have a peek at the glass display case in the back. Freshly made antipasti, cold cuts, salads, pannini sandwiches and risotto are just some of the delectables available for lunch or takeout. The menu changes regularly, as the owners try out new recipes. Let them know if you have a favorite, and you may find it in store next time.

1898 West First Ave. ✆ **604/731-5370.** Fax 604/731-5369. Everything under C$9 (US$5.85). Daily 8am-9pm. Bus: 22 to Cornwall and Cypress.

La Casa Gelato *Finds* No self-respecting ice-cream fiend could possibly pass up a visit to La Casa Gelato. Trust us, it's worth the trek out to this obscure industrial area near Commercial Drive, where ice-cream lovers gather for a taste of one or more of the 198 flavors in store. Of course you don't get that many flavors by simply serving up chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry. How about garlic, lavender, durian-fruit, basil, or hot chili ice cream? We love the pear with gorgonzola sorbet. You're entitled to at least several samples before committing to one or two flavors, so go ahead and be adventurous.

1033 Venables St. ✆ **604251-3211.** Fax 604/251-3922. Everything under C$6 (US$3.90). Daily 10am-11pm. Bus: 10 to Commercial and Venables.

5

Exploring Vancouver

A city perched on the edge of a great wilderness, Vancouver offers unmatched opportunities for exploring the outdoors. Paradoxically, within the city limits Vancouver is intensely urban. There are sidewalk cafes to match those in Paris and shopping streets that rival London's. The forest of downtown residential high-rises looks somewhat like New York, while the buzz and movement of Chinatown reminds you of San Francisco or Canton. Comparisons with other places soon begin to pall, however, as you come to realize that Vancouver is entirely its own creation: a self-confident, sparklingly beautiful city, like no place else on earth.

SIGHTSEEING SUGGESTIONS

If You Have 1 Day

See the sights while you eat your eggs. The breakfast spot with the best view is the **Cafe Pacifica** (✆ **604/895-2480**) in the lobby of the Pan-Pacific Hotel, where you can watch the morning rush of floatplanes dropping in. After breakfast, walk or ride or in-line skate the **Stanley Park Seawall** ★. While in Stanley Park, say hi to the sea otters in the **Vancouver Aquarium.** By now it's definitely lunchtime, so come back to the West End and have lunch at one of the sidewalk cafes on **Denman.** Then wander through the **West End;** maybe stop by the Vancouver Art Gallery or the public library. Wherever you wander, try to finish up around sunset at the foot of Denman Street on **English Bay Beach** ★. Have supper at one of the nearby restaurants specializing in West Coast cuisine. Then head up to **Robson Street** and watch the evening parade of beautiful people.

If You Have 2 Days

On day 2, grab a coffee and a croissant and head down to **Chinatown.** Explore the area for a bit—it's often most active in the early hours—then go for dim sum. Afterwards, drive or take the bus out to the **Museum of Anthropology** on the campus of UBC. The masks and carvings are worth the trip. While out at UBC, walk down the steep trail to **Wreck Beach** (bear in mind

there are nudists at the bottom), or come back and explore the urban waterfront at **Granville Island.** Have dinner in **Kitsilano** or across False Creek in **Yaletown.** Then go barhopping, or find a brew pub and try some of the local ales.

If You Have 3 Days

On day 3, get active—go **kayaking** on Indian Arm, **mountain biking** through the Endowment Lands, **hiking** through Cypress Falls park, or take the **tram** up to Grouse Mountain. Take a picnic lunch along (if you've come by SeaBus, then Lonsdale Quay is a good spot for supplies) and eat outside. **Lighthouse Park** in West Vancouver is a particularly good picnic area. Come suppertime, eat at one of the North Shore restaurants with a view of the city—the **Salmon House,** the **Beach House,** or the **Grouse Nest** up on Grouse Mountain.

If You Have 4 Days or More

On days 4 and 5, the thoroughly urban can retreat to the city and spend the next 2 days exploring neighborhoods like **Kitsilano,** the **Punjabi market,** and **Commercial Drive,** and touring your way through Vancouver's **art gallery,** maritime **museum,** and **public library.** For **outdoors lovers,** make like a Nike ad, and just do it. Go to Whistler and go skiing. Head to Squamish and see the bald eagles. Hike up to Joffre Lake and touch the glacier. Do a horse trek in the high country, or take your bike. Sail up into grizzly country. Kayak Clayoquot Sound.

1 The Top Attractions

DOWNTOWN & THE WEST END

Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre ★★★ One of North America's largest and best, the Vancouver Aquarium houses more than 8,000 marine species, most in meticulously re-created environments.

In the icy-blue Arctic Canada exhibit, you can see beluga whales whistling and blowing water at unwary onlookers. Human-sized freshwater fish inhabit the Amazon Rain Forest gallery, while overhead, an hourly rainstorm is unleashed in an atrium that houses three-toed sloths, brilliant blue and green poison tree frogs, and piranhas. Regal angelfish glide through a re-creation of Indonesia's Bunaken National Park coral reef, and blacktip reef sharks menacingly scour the Tropical Gallery's waters. (Call for the shark and sea otter feeding times.) The Pacific Canada exhibit is dedicated to sea life indigenous to B.C. waters, including the Pacific salmon and the giant Pacific octopus.

Downtown Vancouver Attractions

Architectural Institute of BC **12**
Canada Place **10**
Chinese Cultural Centre **16**
Dr. Sun-Yat-sen Classical Garden **17**
Early Motion Tours **2**
Ecomarine Ocean Kayak Centre **5**
Emily Carr Institute **7**
Granville Island Sportfishing Museum **6**
Granville Island's Water Park and Adventure Playground **8**
H.R. MacMillan Space Centre **4**
Lookout! Harbour Centre Tower **11**
Performance Works **9**
Science World British Columbia **18**
Vancouver Aquarium **1**
Vancouver Art Gallery **13**
Vancouver Centennial Police Museum **15**
Vancouver Maritime Museum **3**
Vancouver Museum **4**
Vancouver Public Library **11**

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Grouse Mountain
WEST VANCOUVER
English Bay
Area of Detail
COQUITLAM
VANCOUVER
SURREY
Strait of Georgia
RICHMOND
Coal Harbour
Canada Place
Burrard Inlet
W. Hastings St.
W. Pender St.
Bute St.
Melville St.
DOWNTOWN
Thurlow St.
W. Cordova St.
W. Hastings St.
GASTOWN
Water St.
Dunsmuir St.
VICTORY SQ.
Seymour St.
Abbott St.
Carrall St.
Burrard St.
Hornby St.
ROBSON SQUARE
Robson St.
Post Office
W. Georgia St.
CHINATOWN
Howe St.
Granville St.
Bus Depot
YALETOWN
Helmcken St.
Davie St.
Homer St.
Hamilton St.
Cambie St.
Beatty St.
Stadium
Richards St.
Mainland St.
Drake St.
Pacific Blvd.
Cambie St. Bridge
Québec St.
W 1st Ave.
False Creek
MOUNT PLEASANT
W 3rd Ave.
W 5th Ave.
Information
Post Office

On the Marine Mammal Deck, there are sea otters, Steller sea lions, beluga whales, and a Pacific white-sided dolphin. During regularly scheduled shows, the aquarium staff explain marine mammal behavior while working with these impressive creatures.

Stanley Park. ✆ **604/659-FISH.** www.vanaqua.org. Admission C$14.95 (US$9.65) adults; C$12 (US$7.80) seniors, students, and youths 13-18; C$9 (US$5.85) children 4-12; free for children under 4. Late June-Labour Day daily 9:30am-7pm; Labour Day-late June daily 10am-5:30pm. Bus: 135; "Around the Park" shuttle bus June-Sept only. Parking C$5 (US$3.25) summer, C$3 (US$1.95) winter.

Vancouver Art Gallery ★★ Designed as a courthouse by British Columbia's leading early-20th-century architect Francis Rattenbury (the architect of Victoria's Empress hotel and the Parliament buildings), and renovated into an art gallery by British Columbia's leading late-20th-century architect Arthur Erickson, the VAG is an excellent stop for anyone who wants to see what sets Canadian and West Coast art apart from the rest of the world. There is an impressive collection of paintings by B.C. native Emily Carr, as well as examples of a unique Canadian art style created during the 1920s by members of the "Group of Seven," who included Vancouver painter Fred Varley. On the contemporary side, the VAG hosts rotating exhibits of sculpture, graphics, photography, and video art, some from B.C. artists, many from around the world. Geared to younger audiences, the Annex Gallery offers rotating presentations of visually exciting educational exhibits.

750 Hornby St. ✆ **604/662-4719** or 604/662-4700. www.vanartgallery.bc.ca. Admission C$11 (US$7.15) adults, C$8 (US$5.20) seniors, C$6.50 (US$4.20) students and youths, C$30 (US$19) family, free for children 12 and under. Thurs 5-9pm by donation. Mon-Wed and Fri-Sun 10am-5:30pm; Thurs 10am-9pm. Closed Mon-Tues in fall and winter. SkyTrain: Granville. Bus: 3.

THE WEST SIDE

Granville Island ★★★ *Kids* Almost a city within a city, Granville Island has so much to offer that even a day may not be enough to experience it all—but you can certainly give it a good shot. Browse for crafts, pick up some fresh seafood, enjoy a great dinner, watch some Shakespeare in the park or attend the latest theater performance, rent a yacht, stroll along the waterfront, or simply run through the sprinkler on a hot summer day; it's all there and more!

Once a declining industrial site, Granville Island started its transformation in the late seventies when the government encouraged new people-friendly developments. Maintaining its original industrial look, the former warehouses and factories now house galleries, artist studios, restaurants, and theaters; the cement plant on the

Granville's Greatest Hits

Even though the bustling Public Market makes a fine destination in itself, Granville Island offers so much more. To really get a feel for this neighborhood, stroll along the side streets and explore the alleys and lanes away from the main entrance.

Some must-see or -do attractions:

- RailSpur Alley's 12 artist studios are perfect for browsing; stop in at the **Al'Arte Silk** to see some of the beautifully hand-painted wearable silk art (RailSpur Alley 1369) or pause at the excellent **Kharma Café** for a latte and pastry (RailSpur Alley 1363; ✆ **604/647-1363**).
- Art exhibits at the **Emily Carr Institute** (1399 Johnston St.; ✆ **604/844-3800**) showcase the works of the institute's grads and students. You may be looking at the next Andy Warhol. Open daily 9am to 6pm; admission is free.
- In the summer check the **Performance Works** (✆ **604/687-3020**) schedule for any free outdoor Shakespeare presentations or see what's playing at the **Arts Club Theatre** (✆ **604/687-1644**) or **Waterfront Theatre** (✆ **604/685-1731**).
- Paddle off into the sunset by renting a kayak from one of the marinas on the west side of the island. Beginners can take lessons or head out on a guided tour. **Ecomarine Ocean Kayak Centre** (✆ **604/689-7575**) has everything to get you started. A three-hour kayak lesson for C$55 (US$36) teaches you the basic strokes. Or, explore the waters around Stanley Park with a guide (C$89/US$57). Experienced paddlers may rent equipment (C$48/US$31 per day for a single kayak).
- Granville Islands is one big playground. On a rainy day tuck into the Kids Only Market (daily 10am-6pm) to check out toys, kites, clothes, art supplies and an indoor play area or visit the **Granville Island Museum** (✆ **604/683-1939**) to admire its collection of model boats and trains. The museum is open daily from 10am to 5:30pm; admission is C$3.50-C$6.50 (US$2.25-US$4.20), free for children four and under. On warm summer days the Waterpark is the place to be (free of charge) and any day of the year kids never get tired of chasing sea gulls on the dock. Open daily (weather permitting) from 10am to 6pm, late May until Labour Day.

Tips More Time to Explore

If you can't bear to leave the island, consider staying at the Granville Island Hotel (p. 60). One of the best-kept secrets in town, this hotel is reasonably priced, has a fabulous waterfront location, and located steps from all the Island has to offer.

waterfront is the only industrial tenant left. Access to Granville Island is by Aquabus from the West End, Yaletown, or Kitsilano or across the bridge at Anderson Street (access from W. 2nd Ave.). Three-hour parking is free but avoid driving on weekends and holidays; you will spend more time in your car than in the galleries. Check the website (www.granville-island.net) for upcoming events and festivals or stop by the information center, behind the Kids Market.

Located on the south shore of False Creek, under the Granville Street Bridge. The market is open daily 9am-6pm. For studio and gallery hours and other information about Granville Island, contact the information center at ✆ **604/666-5784.**

H. R. MacMillan Space Centre *Kids* Housed in the same building as the Vancouver Museum, the space center and observatory has hands-on displays and exhibits that will delight budding astronomy buffs and their parents (or older space buffs and their children). Displays are highly interactive: In the Cosmic Courtyard you can try your hand at designing a spacecraft or maneuvering a lunar robot. Or, punch a button and a get a punchy video explanation of the Apollo 17 manned-satellite engine that stands before you. Most exciting of all perhaps is the Virtual Voyages Simulator, which takes you on a voyage to Mars or a collision course with an oncoming comet. In the GroundStation Canada Theatre, there are video presentations about Canada's contributions to the space program and about space in general. The StarTheatre shows movies—many of them for children—on an overhead dome. And on selected nights, you can shoot the moon through a half-meter telescope for C$10 (US$6.50) per camera (✆ **604/736-2655**).

1100 Chestnut St., in Vanier Park. ✆ **604/738-STAR.** www.hrmacmillanspacecentre.com. Admission C$12.75 (US$8.20) adults, C$9.75 (US$6.30) seniors and youths 11-18, C$8.75 (US$5.65) children 5-10, C$5.25 (US$3.40) children under 5, C$40 (US$26) families (up to 5, maximum 2 adults). Additional Virtual Voyages experiences C$5.25 (US$3.40) each. Open Tues-Sun 10am-5pm. Closed Dec 25. Bus: 22.

360 Degrees of Vancouver

The most popular (and most touristed) spot from which to view Vancouver's skyline is high atop the space needle observation deck at the **Lookout!, Harbour Centre Tower,** 555 W. Hastings St. (✆ **604/689-0421**). It's a great place for first-time visitors who want a panorama of the city. The glass-encased Skylift whisks you up 166m (553 ft.) to the rooftop deck in less than a minute. The 360-degree view is remarkable. (Yes, that is Mt. Baker looming above the southeastern horizon.) Skylift admission is C$10 (US$6.50) for adults, C$9 (US$5.85) for seniors, C$7 (US$4.55) for students and youth, C$2 (US$1.30) children 6 and under and C$28 (US$18) for families. It's open daily in summer from 8:30am to 10:30pm and in winter from 9am to 9pm.

Museum of Anthropology ★★★ This isn't just any old museum. In 1976, architect Arthur Erickson re-created a classic Native post-and-beam structure out of modern concrete and glass to house one of the world's finest collections of West Coast Native art.

Enter through doors that resemble a huge, carved, bent-cedar box. Artifacts from potlatch ceremonies flank the ramp leading to the Great Hall's collection of totem poles. Haida artist Bill Reid's touchable cedar bear and sea wolf sculptures sit at the Cross Roads, where source books rest on a reading-height display wall. Reid's masterpiece, *The Raven and the First Men,* is worth the price of admission all by itself. The huge carving in glowing yellow cedar depicts a Haida creation myth, in which Raven—the trickster—coaxes humanity out into the world from its birthplace in a clamshell. Some of Reid's fabulous creations in gold and silver are also on display. Intriguingly, curators have recently begun salting contemporary Native artworks in among the old masterpieces—a sign that West Coast artistic traditions are alive and well.

The Masterpiece Gallery's argillite sculptures, beaded jewelry, and hand-carved ceremonial masks lead the way to the Visible Storage Galleries, where more than 15,000 artifacts are arranged by culture. You can open the glass-topped drawers to view small treasures and stroll past larger pieces housed in tall glass cases. (You can also read more detailed information about the items in conveniently placed reference catalogs.)

Also at the museum is the somewhat incongruous Koerner Ceramics Gallery, a collection of European ceramics that—while interesting—is really only there because old man Koerner had the money to endow the wing to hold his collection.

Don't forget to take a walk around the grounds behind the museum. Overlooking Point Grey are two longhouses built according to the Haida tribal style, resting on the traditional north-south axis. Ten hand-carved totem poles stand in attendance along with contemporary carvings on the longhouse facades.

6393 NW Marine Dr. ✆ **604/822-3825.** www.moa.ubc.ca. Admission C$7 (US$4.55) adults, C$5 (US$3.25) seniors, C$4 (US$2.60) students and children 6-18, C$20 (US$13) families, free for children under 6. Free Tues after 5pm. Late May to early Sept Wed-Mon 10am-5pm, Tues 10am-9pm; early Sept to late May Wed-Sun 11am-5pm, Tues 11am-9pm. Closed Dec 25-26. Bus: 4, 10, or 99 (10-min. walk from UBC bus loop).

Science World British Columbia ★ *Kids* Science World is impossible to miss. It's in the big blinking geodesic dome on the eastern end of False Creek. Inside, it's a hands-on scientific discovery center where you and your kids can light up a plasma ball, walk through a 1,700-square-foot maze, walk through the interior of a camera, create a cyclone, watch a zucchini explode as it's charged with 80,000 volts, stand inside a beaver lodge, play in wrist-deep magnetic liquids, create music with a giant synthesizer, and watch mind-blowing three-dimensional slide and laser shows as well as other optical effects. In the OMNIMAX Theatre—a huge projecting screen equipped with Surround-Sound—you can take a death-defying flight through the Grand Canyon and perform other spine-tingling feats. Science World also hosts many spectacular traveling exhibitions, such as "Backyard Monsters," which features giant robotic bugs.

1455 Quebec St. ✆ **604/443-7443.** www.scienceworld.bc.ca. Admission C$12.75 (US$8.25) adults; C$8.50 (US$5.50) seniors, students, and children; free for children under 4. Family pass, including 2 adults and 4 children C$39.75 (US$26). Combination tickets available for OMNIMAX film. Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat-Sun and holidays 10am-6pm. SkyTrain: Main Street-Science World.

Vancouver Maritime Museum *Kids* This museum houses the 1920s Royal Canadian Mounted Police Arctic patrol vessel *St. Roch.* That may not sound like much, but from the time Chris Columbus proved that the continent directly west of Europe was not Cathay, every European explorer's overriding quest was to find the Northwest Passage, the seagoing shortcut to the riches of the east. This little ship is the one that finally did it. The boat has been

preserved in a large atrium, with most of its original stores and equipment still onboard. Tours of the *St. Roch* are particularly popular with children—they get to clamber around the boat poking and prodding stuff.

The other half of the museum holds intricate ship models (a few too many of these, unless you're a serious model buff), antique wood and brass fittings, maps, prints, and a number of permanent exhibits, including "Pirates!"—a treasure chest of an exhibit filled with pirate lore, artifacts, and a miniature ship where kids can dress up and play pirate for the day. Also kid-oriented is the Children's Maritime Discovery Centre, which houses computers, a wall of drawers filled with ship models and artifacts, and observation telescopes aimed at the ships moored in English Bay. Here kids can dress up in more naval costumes.

If the weather is pleasant, be sure to walk across the expansive front lawn at the edge of False Creek to Heritage Harbour, where the museum keeps a collection of beautiful vintage boats. It's also where you can catch the miniferry to Granville Island or the West End.

1905 Ogden Ave., in Vanier Park. ✆ **604/257-8300.** www.vmm.bc.ca. Admission C$8 (US$5.20) adults, C$5.50 (US$3.55) seniors and students, C$18 (US$12) families, free for children under 6. Daily 10am-5pm. Closed Mon Labour Day to Victoria Day (early Oct to late May). Bus: 22, then walk 4 blocks north on Cypress St. Boat: False Creek Ferries dock at Heritage Harbour.

Vancouver Museum Established in 1894, the Vancouver Museum is dedicated to amassing evidence of the city's history, from its days as a Native settlement and European outpost to the city's early-20th-century maturation into a modern urban center. The exhibits allow visitors to walk through the steerage deck of a 19th-century passenger ship, peek into a Hudson's Bay Company frontier trading post, or take a seat in an 1880s Canadian Pacific Railway passenger car. Re-creations of Victorian and Edwardian rooms show how early Vancouverites decorated their homes. Rotating exhibits include a display of the museum's collection of neon signage from Vancouver's former glory days as the West Coast's glitziest neon-sign-filled metropolis during the 1940s and 1950s.

1100 Chestnut St. ✆ **604/736-4431.** www.vanmuseum.bc.ca. Admission C$8 (US$5.20) adults, C$5.50 (US$3.55) youths. Group rates available. Fri-Wed 10am-5pm; Thurs 10am-9pm. Closed Mon Sept-June. Bus: 22, then walk 3 blocks south on Cornwall Ave. Boat: Granville Island Ferry to Heritage Harbour.

VanDusen Botanical Gardens ★ In contrast to the flower fetish displayed by Victoria's famous garden, Vancouver's biggest botanical garden concentrates on whole ecosystems. From trees

hundreds of feet high down to the little lichens on the smallest of damp stones, the gardeners at VanDusen attempt to re-create the plant life of an enormous number of different environments. Depending on which trail you take you may find yourself wandering through the Southern Hemisphere section, the Sino-Himalayan garden, or the northern California garden where giant sequoias reach for the sky. Other parts of the garden highlight individual families; in the maple ghetto, for example, you can marvel at a good two dozen different maples, from the standard eastern sugar maple to the delicate Japanese cut-leaf variety. And should all this tree gazing finally pall, head for the farthest corner of the garden where there lurks a devilishly difficult Elizabethan garden maze.

5251 Oak St. (at W. 37th Ave.) ✆ **604/878-9274.** www.vandusengarden.org. Admission C$7 (US$4.55) adults, C$5 (US$3.25) seniors and youth 13-18, C$3.50 (US$2.25) children 6-12, C$16 (US$10) families, free for children under 6. Off-season discounts. Open daily 10am-dusk. Bus: 17.

GASTOWN & CHINATOWN

Dr. Sun Yat-sen Classical Chinese Garden ★ This small reproduction of a Classical Chinese Scholar's garden truly is a remarkable place, but to get the full effect you have to take the guided tour. Untrained eyes (like ours) will insist on seeing only gaggles of tourists wandering round a pretty pond surrounded by bamboo and funny shaped rocks. The engaging guides, however, can explain that the garden is based on the yin-yang principle, or the idea of harmony through dynamic opposition. To foster opposition (and thus harmony) in the garden, Chinese designers constantly place contrasting elements in juxtaposition: Soft moving water flows across solid stone; smooth swaying bamboo grows around gnarled immovable rocks; dark pebbles are placed next to light pebbles in the floor. Moving with the guide, you discover the yin-yang principle applies to larger elements in a more complex fashion as well.

578 Carrall St. ✆ **604/689-7133.** www.vancouverchinesegarden.com. C$7.50 (US$4.85) adults, C$6 (US$3.90) seniors, C$5 (US$3.25) children and students, children under 5 free; family pass costs C$18 (US$12). Free guided tour included. Daily May 1-June 14 10am-6pm; June 15-Aug 31 9:30am-7pm; Sept 1-Sept 30 10am-6pm; Oct 1-Apr 30 10am-4:30pm. Bus: 19 or 22.

Vancouver Centennial Police Museum A bizarre, macabre, and utterly delightful little place, the Police Museum is dedicated to memorializing some of the best crimes and crime-stoppers in the city's short but colorful history. Housed in the old Vancouver Coroner's Court—where actor Errol Flynn was autopsied after dropping dead in the arms of a 17-year-old girl—the museum features

photos, text, and vintage equipment from files and evidence rooms of Vancouver's finest. The confiscated illegal-weapons display looks like the props department for the film *Road Warrior*. There's also a morgue with bits and pieces of damaged body parts on the wall, a simulated autopsy room, a forensics lab, and a police radio room. On the lighter side, the museum also houses an immense collection of matchbox-sized toy police cars from around the world.

240 E. Cordova St. ✆ **604/665-3346.** www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/police/museum. Admission C$6 (US$3.90) adults, C$4 (US$2.60) students and seniors, free for children 6 and under. Year-round Mon-Fri 9am-3pm; May 1-Aug 31 also Sat 10am-3pm. Bus: 4 or 7.

NORTH VANCOUVER & WEST VANCOUVER

Capilano Suspension Bridge & Park *Overrated* Vancouver's first and oldest tourist trap (built in 1889), this attraction still works—mostly because there's still something inherently thrilling about standing on a narrow, shaky walkway, 69m (230 ft.) above the canyon floor, held up by nothing but a pair of tiny cables. Set in a beautiful 8-hectare (20-acre) park about 15 minutes from the city, the suspension bridge itself is a 135m (450-ft.) long cedar-plank and steel-cable footbridge, which sways gently above the Capilano River. You can nervously cross above kayakers and salmon shooting the rapids far below.

In addition to the bridge, there's a **carving centre** where Native carvers demonstrate their skill; an exhibit describing the region's natural history; guides in period costume who recount Vancouver's frontier days; a pair of restaurants; and—surprise—a gift shop. It's all quite well done, but the fact remains that you're paying a substantial entrance fee to walk across a bridge. It's particularly strange when you realize that nearby there's the Lynn Canyon suspension bridge, which is almost as high, even prettier, set in a far larger forest, almost completely untouristed, and absolutely free. (See the box "The *Other* Suspension Bridge," below.)

3735 Capilano Rd., North Vancouver. ✆ **604/985-7474.** www.capbridge.com. Admission C$13.95 (US$9) adults, C$10.75 (US$7) seniors, C$8 (US$5.20) students, C$3.75 (US$2.40) children 6-12, free for children under 6. Winter discounts available. May-Sept daily 8:30am-dusk; Oct-Apr daily 9am-5pm. Closed Dec 25. Bus: 246 from downtown Vancouver, 236 from Lonsdale Quay SeaBus terminal.

Grouse Mountain Resort ★★ Once a small local ski hill, Grouse has been slowly developing itself into a year-round mountain recreation park, offering impressive views and instantaneous access to the North Shore mountains. Located only a 20-minute drive from downtown, the SkyRide gondola transports you to the

Finds The *Other* Suspension Bridge

Lynn Canyon Park, in North Vancouver between Grouse Mountain and Mount Seymour Provincial Park on Lynn Valley Road, offers a cheaper and possibly more impressive alternative to the Capilano Suspension Bridge. True, the **Lynn Canyon Suspension Bridge** ★★ is both shorter and a little lower that the Capilano bridge (see "The Top Attractions," above), but the waterfall and swirling whirlpools in the canyon below add both beauty and a certain fear-inducing fascination, more than enough to make up for the loss of altitude. Plus, it's free. Call the park's **Ecology Centre,** 3663 Park Rd. (✆ **604/981-3103**), for more information.

mountain's 1,110m (3,700-ft.) summit in about 10 minutes. (Hikers and cardio-fitness fiends can take a near vertical trail called the Grouse Grind. The best of them can do it in 28 min.) At the top, there's a bar, restaurant, large-screen theater, ski and snowboard area, hiking and snowshoeing trails, skating pond, children's snow park, interpretive forest trails, logger sports show, helicopter tours, mountain bike trails, and a Native feast house. Some of these activities are offered free with your SkyRide ticket, but most aren't. Still, the view is one of the best around: the city and the entire lower mainland, from far up the Fraser Valley east across the Gulf of Georgia to Vancouver Island. The Himwus Feast House has gotten good reviews for its Native food and dance.

6400 Nancy Greene Way, North Vancouver. ✆ **604/984-0661.** www.grousemountain.com. SkyRide C$21.95 (US$14) adults, C$19.95 (US$12.90) seniors, C$12.95 (US$8.35) youths, C$7.95 (US$5.15) children 6-12, free for children under 6. SkyRide free with advance Observatory Restaurant reservation. Daily 9am-10pm. SeaBus: Lonsdale Quay, then transfer to bus no. 236.

2 Vancouver's Plazas & Parks

OUTDOOR PLAZAS

Unlike many a city, Vancouver's great urban gathering places stand not at the center but on the periphery; the two **seawalls,** one at one end of Denman street by **English Bay,** the other at the other end of Denman by **Coal Harbour,** are the West Coast equivalent of an Italian piazza, the places where Vancouverites go to stroll and be seen. On warm sunny days, they're packed.

Designed by architect Arthur Erickson to be Vancouver's central plaza, **Robson Square**—between Hornby and Howe streets from Robson to Smithe streets—has never really worked. Though beautifully executed with shrubbery, cherry trees, sculptures, and a triple-tiered waterfall, the square suffers from a basic design flaw: It's sunk one story below street grade, and folks don't seem to like that. Just opposite Robson square, however, the steps of the **Art Gallery** are a great people place, filled with loungers, political agitators, and old men playing chess.

Just down the street a little **Library Square**—at the corner of Robson and Homer streets—is immensely popular with locals, and has been since it was built just 4 years back. People sit on the Coliseum-like steps, bask in the sunshine, read, harangue passersby with half thought-out political ideas, and generally seem to enjoy themselves.

PARKS & GARDENS

Park and garden lovers are in heaven in Vancouver. You can encounter raccoon families in the West End, go downhill or cross-country skiing in West Vancouver, spot bald eagles and peregrine falcons in Richmond, or observe tai chi masters in Chinatown. You can wander a Japanese garden and with the same ticket see one of the largest living botany collections on the West Coast up on the UBC campus. For general information about Vancouver's parks, call ✆ **604/257-8400.**

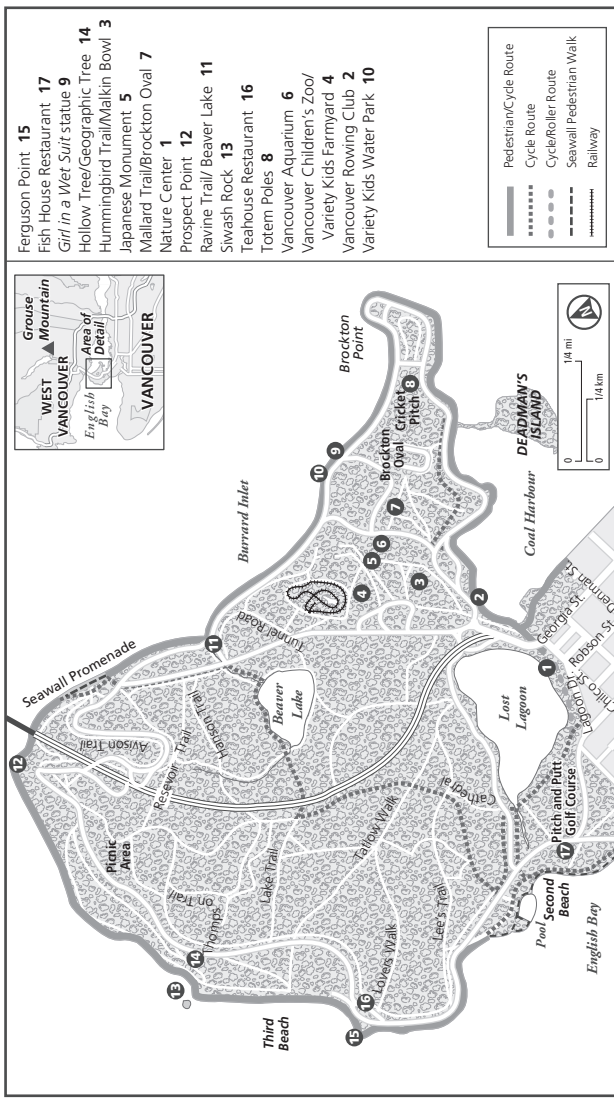
Stanley Park ★ is a 400-hectare (1,000-acre) rainforest near the busy West End. It is named after the same Lord Stanley whose name is synonymous with professional hockey success—the Stanley Cup. The park is filled with towering western red cedar trees, walking trails, manicured lawns, flower gardens, and placid lagoons, such as Lost Lagoon, which used to flow away at low tide before the construction of the road leading to the Lions Gate Bridge. It's surrounded by water except for a small portion of its eastern edge that connects it to the West End. Stanley Park houses the Vancouver Aquarium, a petting zoo, three restaurants and a handful of snack bars, cricket greens, a swimming pool, a miniature railway, and a water park. It also boasts abundant wildlife, including beavers, coyotes, bald eagles, raccoons, trumpeter swans, brant geese, ducks, and skunks, as well as pristine natural settings and amazing marine views. This is where Vancouverites go to run, skate, bike, walk, or just sit. As North America's largest urban park, it is 20% larger than New York's Central Park (which is only 354 hectares/886 acres) and

considerably safer. Take bus no. 23, 35, or 135 to the Stanley Park loop at the base of West Georgia Street.

In Chinatown, the **Dr. Sun Yat-sen Classical Garden** is a small, tranquil oasis in the heart of the city. On the West Side, **Queen Elizabeth Park**—at Cambie Street and West 33rd Avenue—sits atop a 150m (500 ft.) high extinct volcano and is the highest urban vantage point south of downtown, offering panoramic views in all directions. It's Vancouver's most popular location for wedding-photo sessions, with well-manicured gardens and a profusion of colorful flora. There are areas for lawn bowling, tennis, pitch-and-putt golf, and picnicking. The **Bloedel Conservatory** (✆ **604/257-8570**) stands next to the park's huge sunken garden, an amazing reclamation of an abandoned rock quarry. A 42m (140-ft.) high domed structure, the conservatory houses a tropical rainforest with more than 100 plant species as well as free-flying tropical birds. Admission to the conservatory is C$3.95 (US$2.55) for adults and C$2.95 (US$1.90) for seniors and children. Take bus no. 15 to reach the park.

VanDusen Botanical Gardens is nearby. This 22-hectare (55-acre) formal garden features rolling lawns, lakes, an Elizabethan hedge maze, and marble sculptures.

Serious plant lovers will love the University of British Columbia. The prime attraction on the campus is the 28-hectare (70-acre) **UBC Botanical Garden,** 6804 S.W. Marine Dr., Gate 8 (✆ **604/822-4208**), which boasts over 10,000 species of trees, shrubs, and flowers grouped into a B.C. Native garden, a physic (or medicinal) garden, a food garden, and several others. There's also an excellent plant and seed store. Nearby is the **Nitobe Memorial Garden,** 6565 NW Marine Dr., Gate 4 (✆ **604/822-6038**), an exquisitely beautiful traditional Japanese garden. From early March to mid-October, both gardens are open daily from 10am to 6pm. Admission to the Botanical Garden is C$4.75 (US$3.10) for adults; C$2 (US$1.30) for seniors, students and youth; children under 6 are admitted free. Admission for Nitobe Memorial Garden is C$2.75 (US$1.75) for adults and C$1.75 (US$1.15) for seniors, students, and children 6 and older. A dual pass for both gardens is C$6 (US$3.85) for adults only. Free guided tours are offered at both gardens on Mondays and Wednesdays at 1pm, but pre-booking is essential. (If no one books the tour, guides don't show up). From October 5 to March 6, the Botanical Garden is open daily during daylight hours, while the Nitobe Memorial Garden is open Monday through Friday from approximately 10am to 2:30pm. Both gardens are free in the off-season period.



Out near UBC, **Pacific Spirit Park** (usually called the Endowment Lands) comprises 754 hectares (1,885 acres) of temperate rainforest, marshes, and beaches and includes nearly 35km (22 miles)

of trails suitable for hiking, riding, mountain biking, and beachcombing. Across the Lions Gate Bridge, there are six provincial parks that delight outdoor enthusiasts year-round. Good in winter or for those averse to heavy climbing is the publicly maintained **Capilano River Regional Park,** 4500 Capilano Rd. (✆ **604/666-1790**), surrounding the **Capilano Suspension Bridge & Park.** Hikers can follow a gentle trail by the river for 7km (4½ miles) down the well-maintained **Capilano trails** to the Burrard Inlet and the Lions Gate Bridge, or about a mile upstream to **Cleveland Dam,** which serves as the launching point for white-water kayakers and canoeists.

The **Capilano Salmon Hatchery,** on Capilano Road (✆ **604/666-1790**), is on the river's east bank about a half a kilometer (¼ mile) below the Cleveland Dam. Approximately 2 million Coho and Chinook salmon are hatched annually in glass-fronted tanks connected to the river by a series of channels. You can observe the hatching fry (baby fish) before they depart for open waters, as well as the mature salmon that return to the Capilano River to spawn. Admission is free, and the hatchery is open daily from 8am to 7pm (until 4pm in the winter). Drive across the Lions Gate Bridge and follow the signs to North Vancouver and the Capilano Suspension Bridge. Or take the SeaBus to Lonsdale Quay and transfer to bus no. 236; the trip takes less than 45 minutes.

Eight kilometers (5 miles) west of the Lions Gate Bridge on Marine Drive West, West Vancouver, is **Lighthouse Park** ✈. This 74-hectare (185-acre) rugged-terrain forest has 13km (8 miles) of groomed trails and—because it has never been clear-cut—some of the largest and oldest trees in the Vancouver area. One of the paths leads to the 18m (60-ft.) **Point Atkinson Lighthouse,** on a rocky bluff overlooking the Strait of Georgia and a fabulous view of Vancouver. It's an easy trip on bus no. 250. For information about other West Vancouver parks, call ✆ **604/925-7200** weekdays.

Driving up-up-up the mountain from **Lighthouse Park** will eventually get you to the top of **Cypress Provincial Park.** Stop halfway at the scenic viewpoint for a sweeping vista of the Vancouver skyline, the harbor, the Gulf Islands, and Washington State's Mount Baker, which looms above the eastern horizon. The park is 12km (7½ miles) north of Cypress Bowl Road and the Highway 99 junction in West Vancouver. Cypress Provincial Park has an intricate network of trails maintained for hiking during the summer and autumn and for downhill and cross-country skiing during the winter.

Rising 1,430m (4,767 ft.) above Indian Arm, **Mount Seymour Provincial Park,** 1700 Mt. Seymour Rd., North Vancouver (✆ **604/986-2261**), offers another view of the area's Coast Mountains range. The road to this park roams through stands of Douglas fir, red cedar, and hemlock. Higher than Grouse Mountain, Mount Seymour has a spectacular view of Washington State's Mount Baker on clear days. It has challenging hiking trails that go straight to the summit, where you can see Indian Arm, Vancouver's bustling commercial port, the city skyline, the Strait of Georgia, and Vancouver Island. The trails are open all summer for hiking; during the winter, the paths are maintained for skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing. Mount Seymour is open daily from 7am to 10pm.

The Fraser River delta is south of Vancouver. Thousands of migratory birds following the Pacific flyway rest and feed in this area, especially at the 340-hectare (850-acre) **George C. Reifel Bird Sanctuary,** 5191 Robertson Rd., Westham Island (✆ **604/946-6980**), which was created by a former bootlegger and wetland-bird lover. Many other waterfowl species have made this a permanent habitat. More than 263 species have been spotted, including a Temminck's stint, a spotted redshank, bald eagles, Siberian (trumpeter) swans, peregrine falcons, blue herons, owls, and coots.

3 Especially for Kids

Pick up copies of the free monthly newspapers *BC Parent,* 4479 W. 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4P2 (✆ **604/221-0366**); and *West Coast Families,* 8-1551 Johnston St., Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3R9 (✆ **604/689-1331**). *West Coast Families*' centerfold, "Fun in the City," and event calendar list everything currently going on, including **CN IMAX** shows at Canada Place Pier, **OMNIMAX** (✆ **604/443-7443**), shows at Science World British Columbia, and free children's programs. Both publications are available at Granville Island's Kids Market and at neighborhood community centers throughout the city.

Stanley Park offers a number of attractions for children. Stanley Park's Children's Farm (✆ **604/257-8530**) has peacocks, rabbits, calves, donkeys, and Shetland ponies (see "Parks & Gardens," above). Next to the petting zoo is Stanley Park's Miniature Railway (✆ **604/257-8531**). The diminutive steam locomotive with passenger cars runs on a circuit through the woods, carrying nearly as many passengers annually as all of the Alaska-bound cruise ships combined. The zoo and railway are open daily from May through

September (11am-4pm), plus Christmas week and on weekends from October through March. Admission for the petting zoo is C$4(US$2.50) for adults, seniors and youth payC$3(US$1.90) and kids 2 12 C$2 (US$1.25). Summer admission for the railway is C$3 (US$2) for adults, C$2.25 (US$1.50) for youth and seniors, C$1.50 (US$1) for kids; rates vary for some of the events.

Also in Stanley Park, the **Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre** ★ has sea otters, sea lions, whales, and numerous other marine creatures, as well as many exhibits geared towards children (see "The Top Attractions," earlier in this chapter). Across Burrard Inlet on the North Shore, **Maplewood Farm,** 405 Seymour River Place, North Vancouver (✆ **604/929-5610**), has more than 200 barnyard animals (cows, horses, ponies, pigs, sheep, donkeys, ducks, chickens, and more) living on its 2-hectare (5-acre) farm, which is open daily year-round. The ticket booth sells birdseed for feeding the ducks and other fowl, as well as guidebooks. The farm also offers pony rides. The farm is open Tuesday to Sunday from 10am to 4pm, and on designated holiday Mondays during the same hours. Admission is C$3.20 (US$2) for adults, C$1.65 (US$1) for seniors and children. Take bus no. 210 and transfer to the no. 211 or 212.

Three-quarters of an hour east of the city, the **Greater Vancouver Zoo,** 5048-264th St., Aldergrove (✆ **604/856-6825**), is a lush 48-hectare (120-acre) farm filled with lions, tigers, jaguars, ostriches, elephants, buffalo, elk, antelope, zebras, giraffes, a rhino, hippos, and camels. In all, 124 species roam free or in spacious paddocks on the grounds. Located 48 kilometers (30 miles) from Vancouver, the wildlife reserve also has food service and a playground. It's open daily from 9am until dusk. Admission is C$12 (US$7.65) for adults, C$9 (US$5.75) for seniors and children 3 to 15, and free for children under 3 with an adult.

Right in town, **Science World British Columbia** is a hands-on kids' museum where budding scientists can get their hands into everything (see "The Top Attractions," earlier in this chapter). The **Burnaby Village Museum,** 6501 Deer Lake Ave., Burnaby (✆ **604/293-6501**), is a 3.5-hectare (9-acre) re-creation of the Victorian era. You can walk along boardwalk streets among costumed townspeople, watch a blacksmith pound horseshoes, shop in a general store, ride a vintage carousel, peek into an authentic one-room schoolhouse, and visit a vintage ice-cream parlor that's been at the same location since the turn of the 20th century. Admission is C$7.50 (US$4.80) for adults; C$5.55 (US$3.50) for

seniors, travelers with disabilities, students and youths 13 to 18; C$4.65 (US$3) for children 6 to 12; and free for children under 6. It's open daily from 11am to 4:30pm. From the Metrotown Skystation take bus no. 110 to Deer Lake.

The **Fort Langley National Historic Site,** 23433 Mavis Ave., Fort Langley (✆ **604/513-4777**), is the birthplace of British Columbia. In 1827, the Hudson's Bay Company established this settlement to supply its provincial posts. Costumed craftspeople demonstrate blacksmithing, coppering, and woodworking skills, bringing this landmark back to life. It's open daily from 10am to 5pm March 1 to October 31, and weekdays only 10am to 5pm from November 1 to February 28. Admission is C$4 (US$2.70) for adults, C$3 (US$2) for seniors, C$2 (US$1.35) for children 6 to 16, and free for children under 6; a family pass is C$10 (US$6.40). Take the SkyTrain to Surrey Central Station; transfer to bus no. 501.

Tip: The main street of Fort Langley Village, Glover Road, is packed with antiques shops, cafes and a bookstore. Only a 2-minute stroll from the historic site, it makes a fine lunch destination.

At **Granville Island's Water Park and Adventure Playground,** 1496 Cartwright St., kids can really let loose with movable water guns and sprinklers. They can also have fun on the water slides or in the wading pool. The facilities are open during the summer daily (weather permitting) from 10am to 6pm. Admission is free; changing facilities are nearby at the False Creek Community Centre (✆ **604/257-8195**).

For a more traditional family experience, go to **Playland Family Fun Park,** Exhibition Park, East Hastings and Cassiar streets (✆ **604/255-5161**). Admission for unlimited rides is C$22.95 (US$15.15) for those 4 feet and taller, and C$10 (US$7) for those under 4 feet tall for limited rides. Admission for an adult with a paying child under 12 is C$10 (US$7). Relive your childhood at this amusement park by riding on the ornate carousel and wooden roller coaster and playing miniature golf. There's also a Nintendo Pavilion, Electric City Arcade, and petting zoo. The park is open weekends and holidays from late April to mid-June and Labour Day to the end of September from 11am to 7pm; mid-June to Labour Day daily from 11am to 9pm. Take bus no. 14 or 16.

Granville Island's **Kids Market,** 1496 Cartwright St. (✆ **604/689-8447**), is open daily from 10am to 6pm. Playrooms and 28 shops filled with toys, books, records, clothes, and food are all child-oriented. Kids will also love taking the Aquabus or Granville Island Ferry to get there.

4 Organized Tours

If you don't have the time to arrange your own sightseeing tour, let the experts take you around Vancouver. They will escort you in a bus, trolley, double-decker bus, seaplane, helicopter, boat, ferry, taxi, vintage car, or horse-driven carriage.

BUS TOURS

Gray Line of Vancouver, 255 E. First Ave. (✆ **604/879-3363;** www.grayline.ca/vancouver), offers a wide array of tour options. The "Deluxe Grand City Tour" is a 3½-hour excursion through Stanley Park, Gastown, Chinatown, Canada Place, Queen Elizabeth Park, Robson Street, Shaughnessy, and English Bay Beach. Offered year-round, it costs C$40 (US$26) for adults and C$31 (US$20) for children. Departing at 9:15am and 2pm, the bus picks you up from downtown hotels approximately 30 minutes before departure. The daily "Mountains and Sea Tour" takes you up to Grouse Mountain and the Capilano Suspension Bridge. Departing daily at 2pm, it costs C$72 (US$46) for adults and C$49 (US$32) for children, including admission and the SkyTram. Other offerings include day, overnight, and multinight package tours of Vancouver, Victoria, and Whistler, plus helicopter tours and dinner cruises.

Vancouver Trolley Company, 4012 Myrtle St., Burnaby (✆ **604/451-5581;** www.vancouvertrolley.com), operates gas-powered trolleys along a route through Downtown, Chinatown, the West End, and Stanley Park. Between 9am and 6pm in summer (4:30pm in winter), passengers can get on and off at any of the 23 stops, explore, and catch another scheduled trolley. Onboard, drivers provide detailed tour commentary. Tickets are C$25 (US$16) for adults and C$12 (US$7.75) for children 4 to 12.

West Coast City and Nature Sightseeing, 4012 Myrtle St., Burnaby (✆ **604/451-1600;** www.vancouversightseeing.com), offers a variety of minicoach tours, including Grouse Mountain/Capilano Suspension Bridge for C$74 (US$48) for adults, C$70 (US$45) for seniors and students, and C$47 (US$30) for children; and Whistler/Shannon Falls for C$73 (US$47) for adults, C$70 (US$45) seniors and students, and C$40 (US$26) for children; as well as Vancouver City/Capilano Suspension Bridge: C$55 (US$35) for adults, C$52 (US$34) for seniors and students, and C$33 (US$21) for children. Children under 4 go free. Upon request, the staff also offers customized tours such as a Native Culture Tour, garden tour, bear habitat tour on Mount Seymour, or a visit to the

city's art galleries. Minicoaches pick up passengers from downtown hotels, cruise ships, the airport, and the bus/railway station; phone for departure times. Charters and private tours are also available.

RAIL TOURS

On the **Pacific Starlight Dinner Train** (p. 77), a gourmet meal is served in the dome or salon car onboard a vintage locomotive as it travels from North Vancouver to Porteau Cove along the edge of Howe Sound.

BOAT TOURS

Harbour Cruises, Harbour Ferries, no. 1, north foot of Denman Street (✆ **604/688-7246;** www.boatcruises.com), will take you on a 3-hour Sunset Dinner Cruise, including a catered gourmet meal and onboard entertainment; cost for adults, seniors, and students is C$65 (US$41); for children 2 to 11, C$55 (US$35). The cruise leaves at 7pm May through October. The 4-hour Indian Arm Luncheon Cruise includes a salmon lunch, with departure at 11am. Cost for adults, seniors and children is C$50 (US$32).

The company also conducts a 75-minute narrated Harbour Tour aboard the **MPV *Constitution,*** an authentic 19th-century stern-wheeler with a smokestack. Tours depart at 11:30am, 1pm, and 2:30pm daily from mid-May to mid-September, once a day at 2pm in April and October. Fares are C$18 (US$12) for adults, C$15 (US$9.75) for seniors and youths (12-17), C$6 (US$3.90) for children 5 to 11, and free for children under 5. **Paddlewheeler River Adventures,** New Westminster Quay, New Westminster (✆ **604/525-4465;** www.vancouverpaddlewheeler.com), operates Fraser River tours from New Westminster aboard the 19th-century vessel SS *Native.* The company offers a 3-hour entertainment cruise Wednesday through Saturday evenings with live music, departing at 7pm. Ticket price is C$20 (US$13); food and beverages can be purchased on board. More interesting but alas not regularly scheduled are the lunch cruises and day trips up to historic Fort Langley. Please check the website or contact the office for upcoming special events. Experience one of the world's largest commercial ports on **Burrard Water Taxi,** 2255 Commissioner St. (✆ **604/293-1160**). There are no scheduled tour times, so call ahead to book. The guides offer a fascinating insider's view of the busy harbor. The water taxis are available for tours at a rate of C$145 (US$94) per hour for 12 people. When the boats aren't escorting visitors around the harbor, they're shuttling the captains and crews of the freighters anchored in the Burrard Inlet to and from their vessels.

AIR TOURS

Baxter Aviation, Barbary Coast Marina, P.O. Box 1110, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 6E7 (✆ **800/661-5599** or 604/683-6525; www.baxterair.com), operates 11 daily floatplane flights from downtown Vancouver. The 30-minute "Vancouver Scenic" tour flies over Stanley Park and the Coast Mountains; the 5-hour "Whistler Mountain Resort" tour includes a 3-hour stopover. Fares range from C$76 (US$49) per person for 30 minutes to C$359 (US$233) per person for 5 hours, with a variety of midrange tours in between. Other packages offer flights to Victoria, Johnstone Strait, glacial lakes, and prime fly-fishing and whale-watching spots.

Harbour Air (✆ **604/688-1277;** www.harbour-air.com) is on Coal Harbour just steps west of the Canada Place Pier. Look for the seaplanes arriving and departing. Thirty-minute seaplane flights over downtown Vancouver, Stanley Park, and the North Shore are C$85 (US$55) per person, C$70 (US$45) if your party includes four or more people. Many longer tours to alpine lakes and glaciers and nearby islands, as well as regularly scheduled flights to Victoria, Nanaimo, and Prince Rupert, are also available.

Helijet Charters, 5911 D Airport Rd. S., Richmond (✆ **800/987-4354** or 604/270-1484; www.helijet.com), offers a variety of daily tours that depart from the Vancouver Harbour Heliport near Canada Place Pier. The "West Coast Spectacular" is a 20-minute tour of the city, Stanley Park, and North Shore mountains for C$140 (US$90) per person. For a bird's-eye view of the city, the 30-minute "Greater Vancouver Scenic Tour" costs C$195 (US$126) per person, and the "North Shore Discovery" tour lasts 45 minutes and costs C$275 (US$177) per person; these prices are per person with a minimum of three people. Tours that depart from the Grouse Mountain summit take 10 to 15 minutes and cost C$75 to C$110 (US$48-US$71) per person. The "Fly, Dine, and Drive" package takes you by helicopter from downtown Vancouver to the top of Grouse Mountain for dinner, returning to the city by limousine; it costs C$275 (US$177) per person for a party of two. Custom mountaintop helipicnics, heli-golfing packages, and special trips can also be arranged.

SPECIALTY TOURS

Early Motion Tours, 1-1380 Thurlow St. (✆ **604/687-5088**), offers private sightseeing tours around Vancouver aboard a restored 1930 Model A Ford Phaeton convertible that holds up to four passengers plus the driver. Reservations are required. Limousine rates apply: C$100 (US$65) per hour for up to four people, and

include a souvenir Polaroid of you in the car. There is a 1-hour minimum. The office is open daily from 7:30am to 8pm.

AAA Horse & Carriage Ltd., Stanley Park (✆ **604/681-5115;** www.stanleyparktours.com), carries on a century-old tradition of horse-drawn carriage rides through Stanley Park. Tours depart every 30 minutes between mid-March and October from the lower aquarium parking lot on Park Drive across from the Vancouver Rowing Club near the Georgia Street park entrance. Tours last an hour and cover portions of the park that even most locals have never seen. Rates are C$18.65 (US$12) for adults, C$17 (US$11) for seniors and students, C$11.20 (US$7.25) for children 3 to 12, and children under 3 go free; a family rate is available for $55.95 (US$36) and includes two adults or seniors and two children or students.

Yes, the truth is out there and so are the *X-Files* fans. Even though the series has ended, die-hards can still depart on the **X Tour** (✆ **604/609-2770;** www.x-tour.com) for guided tours of *X-Files* shooting locations around Vancouver, along with other sights guaranteed to delight the true believer. Costs are from C$25 (US$16) per adult for a 1-hour walking tour to C$149 (US$96) per person (minimum of two) for a 3-hour limo tour.

WALKING TOURS

Walkabout Historic Vancouver (✆ **604/720-0006;** www.walkabouthistoricvancouver.com) offers 2-hour walking tours through Vancouver historic sites, complete with guides dressed as 19th-century schoolmarms. Tours depart daily at 9am, noon, and 3pm February through November, and by request during other months. The cost is C$18 (US$11.60) per person. Walking tours of China-town are available from the **Chinese Cultural Centre** (✆ **604/687-7993**) for C$5 (US$3.25) adults, C$4 (US$2.90) seniors, and C$3 (US$1.95) students and children. July through September, tours depart daily at 11am and 1:30pm; during other times, please phone ahead to book a tour. During the summer months the **Architectural Institute of BC** (✆ **604/638-8588,** ext. 306; www.aibc.bc.ca/public/arch_tours/arch-tours-set.html) offers a number of free architectural walking tours of downtown Vancouver neighborhoods. The 2-hour tours run Wednesday through Sunday and depart from different locations in the city. Call for details and to book. The **Vancouver Tourism Info Centre** at 200 Burrard St. (p. 133) has a number of brochures on self-guided tours throughout the city.

5 Outdoor Activities

Just about every imaginable sport has a world-class outlet within the Vancouver city limits. Downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, sea kayaking, fly-fishing, hiking, paragliding, and mountain biking are just a few of the options. Activities that can be practiced close by include rock climbing, river rafting, and heli-skiing.

An excellent resource for outdoor enthusiasts is **Mountain Equipment Co-op,** 130 W. Broadway (✆ **604/872-7858**). The MEC's retail store has a knowledgeable staff, and the Co-op also publishes an annual mail-order catalogue.

BEACHES

Only 10% of Vancouver's annual rainfall occurs during June, July, and August; 60 days of summer sunshine is not uncommon. In addition to being a great place for viewing sunsets, **English Bay Beach** ★, at the end of Davie Street off Denman Street and Beach Avenue, has an interesting history. It was Joe Fortes's front yard for more than 35 years. Fortes was a legendary Caribbean-born lifeguard and bartender who made English Bay Beach his home. The bathhouse dates to the turn of the 20th century, and a huge playground slide is mounted on a raft just off the beach every summer.

South of English Bay Beach, near the Burrard Street Bridge and the Vancouver Aquatic Centre, is **Sunset Beach.** Running along False Creek, it's actually a picturesque strip of sandy beaches filled with hulking sections of driftwood that serve as windbreaks and provide a little privacy for sunbathers and picnickers. There's a snack bar, a soccer field, and a long, gently sloping grassy hill for people who prefer lawn to sand.

On **Stanley Park**'s western rim, **Second Beach** is a quick stroll north from English Bay Beach. A playground, a snack bar, and an immense heated freshwater pool—C$4.15 (US$2.70) for adults, C$2.90 (US$1.87) for seniors, C$3.10 (US$2) for youths 13 to 18, and C$2.10 (US$1.35) for children 6 to 12—make this a convenient spot for families. Farther along the seawall lies secluded **Third Beach,** which is due north of Stanley Park Drive. Locals tote along grills and coolers to this spot, a popular place for summer-evening barbecues and sunset watching. The hollow tree, Geographic Tree, and Siwash Rock are neighboring points of interest.

Kitsilano Beach ★, along Arbutus Drive near Ogden Street, is affectionately called Kits Beach. It's an easy walk from the Maritime Museum and the False Creek ferry dock. A heated

saltwater swimming pool is open throughout the summer. Admission is the same as for Second Beach Pool, above. The summertime amateur theater, **Kitsilano Showboat,** attracts a local crowd looking for evening fun.

Farther west on the other side of Pioneer Park is **Jericho Beach** (Alma St. off Point Grey Rd.). This is another local after-work and weekend social spot. **Locarno Beach,** off Discovery Street and NW Marine Drive, and **Spanish Banks,** NW Marine Drive, wrap around the northern point of the UBC campus and University Hill. (Be forewarned that beachside restrooms and concessions on the promontory end abruptly at Locarno Beach.) Below UBC's Museum of Anthropology is **Point Grey Beach,** a restored harbor defense site. The next beach is **Wreck Beach**—Canada's largest nude beach. You get down to Wreck Beach by taking the very steep Trail 6 on the UBC campus near Gate 6 down to the water's edge. Extremely popular with locals, Wreck Beach is also the city's most pristine and least-developed sandy stretch. The Wreck Beach Preservation Society maintains it. It's bordered on three sides by towering trees.

At the northern foot of the Lions Gate Bridge, **Ambleside Park** is a popular North Shore spot. The quarter-mile beach faces the Burrard Inlet.

BICYCLING & MOUNTAIN BIKING

The most popular cycling path in the city runs along the **Seawall** around the perimeter of Stanley Park. Offering stunning views of the city, the Burrard Inlet, and English Bay, this pathway is extremely popular with cyclists, in-line skaters, and pedestrians alike. Other marked cycle lanes traverse the rest of the city, among them the cross-town **Off-Broadway** route, the **Adanac** route, and the **Ontario Street** route. Runners and cyclists have separate lanes on developed park and beach paths. Some West End hotels offer guests bike storage and rentals. One of the city's most scenic cycle paths has been extended and now runs all the way from Canada Place Pier to Pacific Spirit Park. It connects Canada Place, Stanley Park and the Seawall Promenade, English Bay and Sunset beaches, and Granville Island to Vanier Park, Kitsilano and Jericho beaches, and Pacific Spirit Park. Cycling maps are available at most bicycle retailers and rental outlets.

Local mountain bikers love the cross-country ski trails on **Hollyburn Mountain** in Cypress Provincial Park. The Secret Trail Society started building trails 4 years ago along **Grouse Mountain**'s backside, and they are now considered some of the lower mainland's

best. Mount Seymour's very steep **Good Samaritan Trail** connects to the Baden-Powell Trail and the Bridle Path near Mount Seymour Road. The route is recommended only for world-class mountain bikers—the types who pour Gatorade on their Wheaties. Closer to downtown, both **Pacific Spirit Park** and **Burnaby Mountain** offer excellent beginner and intermediate off-road trails.

Hourly rentals run around C$3.75 (US$2.40) for a one-speed "Cruiser" to C$10 (US$6.45) for a top-of-the-line mountain bike; C$15 to C$40 (US$9.70-US$26) for a day, helmets and locks included. Bikes and child trailers are available by the hour or day at **Spokes Bicycle Rentals & Espresso Bar,** 1798 W. Georgia St. (✆ **604/688-5141**). **Alley Cat Rentals,** 1779 Robson St., in the alley (✆ **604/684-5117**), is a popular shop that rents city or mountain bikes, child trailers, child seats, locks, helmets, and in-line skates (protective gear included). **Bayshore Bicycle and Rollerblade Rentals,** 745 Denman St. (✆ **604/688-2453**), rents 21-speed mountain bikes, bike carriers, tandems, city bikes, in-line skates, and kids' bikes.

BOATING

You can rent 15- to 17-foot power boats for as little as a few hours or up to several weeks at **Stanley Park Boat Rentals Ltd.,** Coal Harbour Marina (✆ **604/682-6257**). **Granville Island Boat Rentals, Ltd.,** 1696 Duranleau St., Granville Island (✆ **604/682-6287**), offers hourly, daily, and weekly rentals of 15- to 19-foot speedboats. **Jerry's Boat Rentals,** Granville Island (✆ **604/644-3256**), is just steps away and offers similar deals. Rates on all the above begin at around C$30 (US$19) per hour and C$150 (US$97) per day for a 17-foot sport boat that holds four. **Delta Charters,** 3500 Cessna Dr., Richmond (✆ **800/661-7762** or 604/273-4211; www.deltacharters.com), has weekly and monthly rates for 32- to 58-foot powered boat craft. Prices begin around C$1,600 (US$1,032) per week for a boat that sleeps four (which isn't a bad deal when you consider that you won't need a hotel room).

CANOEING & KAYAKING

Both placid, urban False Creek and the incredibly beautiful 30km (19-mile) North Vancouver fjord known as Indian Arm have launching points that can be reached by car or bus. Rentals range from C$15 (US$9.70) per hour to C$50 (US$32) per day for single kayaks and about C$50 (US$32) per day for canoe rentals. Customized tours range from C$70 to C$110 (US$45-US$71) per person.

Ecomarine Ocean Kayak Centre, 1668 Duranleau St., Granville Island (✆ **888/425-2925** or 604/689-7575; www.ecomarine.com), has 2-hour, daily, and weekly kayak rentals, as well as courses and organized tours. The company also has an office at the **Jericho Sailing Centre,** 1300 Discovery St., at Jericho Beach (✆ **604/222-3565**). In North Vancouver, **Deep Cove Canoe and Kayak Rentals** (at the foot of Gallant St.), Deep Cove (✆ **604/929-2268;** www.deepcovekayak.com), is an easy starting point for anyone planning an Indian Arm run. It offers hourly and daily rentals of canoes and kayaks as well as lessons and customized tours.

Lotus Land Tours, 2005-1251 Cardero St. (✆ **800/528-3531** or 604/684-4922; www.lotuslandtours.com), runs guided kayak tours on Indian Arm. Tours come complete with transportation to and from Vancouver, a barbecue salmon lunch, and incredible scenery. Operator Peter Loppe uses very wide stable kayaks, perfect for first-time paddlers. One-day tours cost C$145 (US$94) for adults, C$99 (US$64) for children.

ECOTOURS

Lotus Land Tours, 2005-1251 Cardero St. (✆ **800/528-3531** or 604/684-4922), runs guided kayak tours on Indian Arm (see "Canoeing & Kayaking," above). From late November to the end of January, this small local company also offers unique float trips on down the Squamish River to see the large concentration of bald eagles up close. **Rockwood Adventures,** 1330 Fulton Ave. (✆ **604/926-7705;** www.rockwoodadventures.com), has guided walks of the North Shore rainforest, complete with a trained naturalist and a gourmet lunch. Tours cover Capilano Canyon, or Lighthouse Park, and start at C$70 (US$45) for a half-day, including snack and drink, or C$130 (US$84) for a full-day trip to Bowen Island, including transportation, guide, and lunch. Seniors and children's discounts available.

FISHING

Five species of salmon, rainbow and Dolly Varden trout, steelhead, and even sturgeon abound in the local waters. To fish, you need a nonresident saltwater or freshwater license. Tackle shops sell licenses, have information on current restrictions, and often carry the *BC Tidal Waters Sport Fishing Guide* and *BC Sport Fishing Regulations Synopsis for Non-tidal Waters.* Independent anglers should also pick up a copy of the *BC Fishing Directory and Atlas.* The *Vancouver Sun* prints a daily **fishing report** in the B section that details which fish are in season and where they can be found.

Hanson's Fishing Outfitters, 102-580 Hornby St. (✆ **604/684-8988;** www.hansons-outfitters.com), and **Granville Island Boat Rentals,** 1696 Duranleau St. (✆ **604/682-6287**), are outstanding outfitters. Licenses for freshwater fishing are C$15 (US$9.70) for 1 day or C$30 (US$19) for 8 days for non BC-residents. Saltwater fishing licenses cost C$8 (US$5.20) for 1 day, C$20 (US$13) for 3 days, and C$35 (US$23) for 5 days. For more details on fishing around the province check **www.fisheries.gov.bc.ca**. **Bonnie Lee Fishing Charters Ltd.,** on the dock at the entrance to Granville Island (mailing address: 744 W. King Edward Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 2C8; ✆ **604/290-7447**), is another reputable outfitter and also sells fishing licenses.

You can pick up equipment at **Hanson's Fishing Outfitters** (see above) or **Ruddick's Fly Shop,** 1654 Duranleau St. (✆ **604/985-5650**). If you go to Granville Island, be sure to stop by the **Granville Island Sport Fishing Museum,** 1502 Duranleau (✆ **604/683-1939**).

Fly-fishing in national and provincial parks requires special permits, which you can get at any park site for a nominal fee. Permits are valid at all Canadian parks.

GOLF

This is a year-round Vancouver sport. With five public 18-hole courses and half a dozen pitch-and-putt courses in the city and dozens more nearby, no golfer is far from his or her love. The public **University Golf Club,** 5185 University Blvd. (✆ **604/224-1818**), is a great 6,560-yard, par-71 course with a clubhouse, pro shop, locker rooms, bar and grill, and sports lounge. Or call **A-1 Last Minute Golf Hotline** (✆ **800/684-6344** or 604/878-1833) for substantial discounts and short-notice tee times at more than 30 Vancouver-area courses. There's no membership fee. A number of excellent public golf courses, maintained by the **Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation** (✆ **604/257-8400;** www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/parks), can be found throughout the city. **Langara Golf Course,** 6706 Alberta St., around 49th and Cambie Street (✆ **604/713-1816**), built in 1926 and recently renovated and redesigned, is one of the most popular golf courses in the province. Greens fees top out at C$45 (US$29) for an adult, with discounts for youth, seniors, and weekday tee times. To reserve phone ✆ **604/280-1818** up to 5 days in advance or call the city at ✆ **604/257-8400** during office hours for more information.

Leading private clubs are situated on the North Shore and in Vancouver. Check with your club at home to see if you have reciprocal visiting memberships with one of the following: **Capilano Golf and Country Club,** 420 Southborough Dr., West Vancouver (✆ **604/922-9331**); **Marine Drive Golf Club,** W. 57th Avenue and S.W. Marine Drive (✆ **604/261-8111**); **Seymour Golf and Country Club,** 3723 Mt. Seymour Pkwy., North Vancouver (✆ **604/929-2611**); **Point Grey Golf and Country Club,** 3350 SW Marine Dr. (✆ **604/261-3108**); and **Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club,** 4300 SW Marine Dr. (✆ **604/266-4141**). Greens fees range from C$42 to C$72 (US$27-US$46).

HIKING

Great trails for hikers of all levels run through Vancouver's dramatic environs. Good trail maps are available from the **Greater Vancouver Regional Parks District** (✆ **604/432-6350**) and from **International Travel Maps and Books,** 539 Pender St. (✆ **604/687-3320**), which also stocks guidebooks and topographical maps. Or pick up a local trail guide at any bookstore.

Just a few yards from the entrance to Grouse Mountain Resort is one entry to the world-famous **Baden-Powell Trail,** a 42km (26-mile) span of thick forest, rocky bluffs, and snow-fed streams racing through ravines. It starts at Cates Park on the Dollarton Highway and stretches west to Horseshoe Bay. Even if you only want to cover the stretch from Grouse Mountain to Mount Seymour, start early and be ready for some steep ascents. The timer guide at the trail head marker has been annotated by hikers who've found it takes longer to do the loop than is indicated. Give yourself a full day for this hike.

If you're looking for a challenge without the time commitment, hike the aptly named **Grouse Grind** from the bottom of Grouse Mountain to the top; then buy a one-way ticket down on the Grouse Mountain SkyRide gondola. The one-way fare (down) is C$5 (US$3.20) per person.

If you're looking for a bit more scenery with a bit less effort, take the Grouse Mountain SkyRide up to the **Grouse chalet** and start your hike at an altitude of 1,100m (3,700 ft.). The trail north to Goat Mountain is well marked and should take approximately 6 hours round-trip, though you may want to build in some extra time to linger on the top of Goat and take in the spectacular 360° views of Vancouver, Vancouver Island, and the snow-capped peaks of the Coast Mountains.

Lynn Canyon Park, Lynn Headwaters Regional Park, Capilano River Regional Park, Mount Seymour Provincial Park, Pacific Spirit Park, and **Cypress Provincial Park** (see "The Top Attractions" and "Parks & Gardens," above) have good, easy to challenging trails that wind up through stands of Douglas fir and cedar and contain a few serious switchbacks. Pay attention to the trail warnings posted at the parks; some have bear habitats. And always remember to sign in with the park service at the start of your chosen trail. Golden Ears, in Golden Ears Provincial Park, and The Lions, in West Vancouver, are for seriously fit hikers.

ICE-SKATING

Robson Square has free skating on a covered ice rink directly under Robson Street between Howe and Hornby streets. It's open from November to early April. Rentals are available in the adjacent concourse. The **West End Community Centre,** 870 Denman St. (✆ **604/257-8333**), also rents skates at its enclosed rink, which is open October through March. The enormous Burnaby 8 Rinks **Ice Sports Centre,** 6501 Sprott, Burnaby (✆ **604/291-0626**), is the Vancouver Canucks' official practice facility. It has eight rinks, is open year-round, and offers lessons and rentals. Call ahead to check hours for public skating.

IN-LINE SKATING

You'll find locals rolling along beach paths, streets, park paths, and promenades. If you didn't bring a pair of blades, try **Bayshore Bicycle and Rollerblade Rentals,** 745 Denman St. (✆ **604/688-2453**). Rentals generally run C$8 (US$5) per hour or C$19 (US$12) for 8 hours.

JOGGING

You'll find fellow runners traversing the **Stanley Park Seawall** ★, **Lost Lagoon,** and **Beaver Lake.** If you're a dawn or dusk runner, take note that this is one of the world's safer city parks. However, if you're alone, don't tempt fate—stick to open and lighted areas. Other prime areas in the city are Kitsilano Beach, Jericho Beach, and Spanish Banks for nice flat running along the ocean, or take the seawall all around False Creek. If you feel like doing a little racing, competitions take place throughout the year; ask for information at any runners' outfitters, such as **Forerunners,** 3504 W. Fourth Ave. (✆ **604/732-4535**), or **Running Room,** 679 Denman St. (corner of Georgia; ✆ **604/684-9771**). Check **www.raceheadquarters.com** for running events around Vancouver and British Columbia.

PARAGLIDING

Summertime paragliding may be the ultimate flying experience. Most of the areas in British Columbia where it's offered are outside Vancouver: **Whistler Paragliding,** in Whistler (✆ **604/938-8830**), offers an introductory tandem flight at C$140 (US$90) or 3-day course for C$285 (US$184) where you will learn ground handling, complete short hops, and fly with an instructor. In North Vancouver, **First Flight Paragliding School** (✆ **604/988-1111**) offers tandem flights in summer only from the peak of Grouse Mountain, at C$150 (US$97) for 2 hours. The actual flight takes approximately 20 minutes.

SAILING

Navigating sailboats in the unfamiliar surrounding straits is unsound unless you enroll in a local sailing course before attempting it. Knowing the tides, currents, and channels is essential. Multiday instruction packages sometimes include guided Gulf Island cruises.

If all you want is to get out for a day, you can charter a 3-hour yacht cruise with one of the following outfitters. **Cooper Boating Centre,** 1620 Duranleau St. (✆ **604/687-4110;** www.cooperboating.com), offers cruises, boat rentals, and sail-instruction packages on 20- to 43-foot boats. Boat rentals start at C$69 (US$45) for a half-day rental in the off season and go as high as C$600 (US$387) for a full-day rental in the peak season, depending on the size of the boat.

SKIING & SNOWBOARDING

Top-notch skiing lies outside the city at the **Whistler** and **Blackcomb Resorts,** 11km (70 miles) north of Vancouver. However, if you have only a day or two in Vancouver, you don't even have to leave the city to get in a few runs. It seldom snows in the city's downtown and central areas, but Vancouverites can ski before work and after dinner at the three ski resorts in the North Shore mountains.

Grouse Mountain Resort, 6400 Nancy Greene Way, North Vancouver (✆ **604/984-0661;** snow report 604/986-6262; www.grousemountain.com), is about 3km (2 miles) from the Lions Gate Bridge, overlooking the Burrard Inlet and Vancouver's skyline (see "The Top Attractions," earlier in this chapter). Four chairs, two beginner tows, and two T-bars take you to 24 alpine runs. The resort has night skiing, special events, instruction, and a spectacular view, as well as a 90m (300-ft.) half pipe for snowboarders. Though the

area is small, all skill levels are covered, with two beginner trails, three blue trails, and five black-diamond runs, including Coffin and Inferno, which follow the east slopes down from 1,230m to 750m (4,100-2,500 ft.). Rental packages and a full range of facilities are available. Lift tickets good for all-day skiing are C$35 (US$23) for adults, C$19 (US$12) for seniors, C$25 (US$16) for youths, and C$15 (US$10) for children 6 through 12; children under 6 go free.

Mount Seymour Provincial Park, 1700 Mt. Seymour Rd., North Vancouver (✆ **604/986-2261;** snow report 604/986-3999; www.mountseymour.com), has the area's highest base elevation; it's accessible via four chairs and a tow. Lift tickets are C$29 (US$19) all day for adults, C$19 (US$12) for seniors, C$24 (US$15) for youths 12 to 19, C$14 (US$9) for children 6 to 11. Nighttime skiing is C$19 (US$12) for adults, C$17 (US$11) for seniors and youths 12 to 19, and C$9 (US$5.85) for children 6 to 11. In addition to day and night skiing, the facility offers snowboarding, snowshoeing, and tobogganing along its 22 runs. There are 26km (16 miles) of cross-country trails. The resort specializes in teaching first-timers. Camps for children and teenagers, and adult clinics, are available throughout the winter.

Mount Seymour has one of Western Canada's largest equipment rental shops, which will keep your measurements on file for return visits. Shuttle service is available during ski season from various locations on the North Shore, including the Lonsdale Quay SeaBus. For more information call ✆ **604/986-2261.**

Cypress Bowl, 1610 Mt. Seymour Rd. (✆ **604/926-5612;** snow report 604/419-7669; http://cypressmountain.com/default.html), has the area's longest vertical drop (525m/1,750 ft.), challenging ski and snowboard runs, and 16km (10 miles) of track-set cross-country ski trails (including 5km/3 miles set aside for night skiing). Full-day lift tickets are C$42 (US$27) for adults, with reduced rates for youths, seniors, and children. Cross-country full-day passes are C$15 (US$9.75) for adults, with reduced rates for youths, seniors, and children. Snowshoe trail tickets are available for C$6 (US$3.85). Discounts for half-day, nighttime, and multiday tickets are available. Cypress also offers excellent 1-day and 5-day lesson packages for skiing or riding as well as an intro class to cross country skiing (classic and skate)

Cypress Mountain Sports, 510 and 518 Park Royal S., West Vancouver (✆ **604/878-9229**), offers shuttle service to and from the ski area. Round-trip tickets are C$9 (US$5.85). Cypress Mountain Sports stocks a complete selection of downhill, cross-country

(including backcountry, skating, racing, and touring), and snowboarding equipment and accessories. The rental and repair department, staffed by avid skiers, offers a broad selection of equipment. Rental and repair prices are quite reasonable. The store also offers guided hikes in summer and snowshoe treks in winter.

SWIMMING & WATER SPORTS

Vancouver's midsummer saltwater temperature rarely exceeds 65°F (18°C). Some swimmers opt for fresh- and saltwater pools at city beaches (see "Beaches," earlier in this chapter). Others take to the water at public aquatic centers.

The **Vancouver Aquatic Centre,** 1050 Beach Ave. at the foot of Thurlow Street (✆ **604/665-3424**), has a heated, 50m Olympic pool, saunas, whirlpools, weight rooms, diving tanks, locker rooms, showers, child care, and a tot pool. Adult admission is C$4 (US$2.60). The new, coed **YWCA Fitness Centre,** 535 Hornby St. (✆ **604/895-5777**), in the heart of downtown, has a 6-lane, 25m ozonated (much milder than chlorinated) pool, steam room, whirlpool, conditioning gym, and aerobic studios. A day pass is C$12 (US$7.75) for adults. UBC's **Aquatic Centre** (call ✆ **604/822-4522** for the pool schedule), located next door to the Student Union Building and the bus loop, has designated hours when facilities are open for public use. Adult admission is C$4 (US$2.60), C$3 (US$1.95) for youths and students, and C$2.25 (US$1.45) for seniors.

TENNIS

The city maintains 180 outdoor hard courts that have a 1-hour limit and accommodate patrons on a first-come, first-served basis from 8am until dusk. Local courtesy dictates that if people are waiting, you surrender the court on the hour. (Heavy usage times are evenings and weekends.) With the exception of the Beach Avenue courts, which charge a nominal fee, all city courts are free.

Stanley Park has 4 courts near Lost Lagoon and 17 courts near the Beach Avenue entrance, next to the Fish House Restaurant. **Queen Elizabeth Park**'s 18 courts service the central Vancouver area, and **Kitsilano Beach Park**'s 10 courts service the beach area between Vanier Park and the UBC campus.

You can play at night at the **Langara Campus** of Vancouver Community College, on West 49th Avenue between Main and Cambie streets. The **UBC Coast Club,** on Thunderbird Boulevard (✆ **604/822-2505**), has 10 outdoor and 4 indoor courts. Indoor

courts are C$12 (US$7.80) per hour, plus C$3 (US$1.95) per person; outdoor courts are C$3 (US$1.95) per person.

Bayshore Bicycle and Rollerblade Rentals, 745 Denman St. (✆ **604/688-2453**), rents tennis rackets for C$10 (US$6) per day.

WHITE-WATER RAFTING

Located just a 2½-hour drive from Vancouver on the wild Nahatlatch river, **Reo Rafting** (✆ **800/736-7238** or 604/461-7238; www.reorafting.com) offers some of the best guided white-water trips in the province, at a very reasonable price. One-day packages—including breakfast, lunch, all your gear, and 4 to 5 hours on the river—start at C$110 (US$71). Multiday trips and group packages are also available.

WILDLIFE WATCHING

Vancouver is an internationally famous stop for naturalists, eco-tourists, and thousands of migratory birds; so bring your cameras, binoculars, and spotting books! Orcas, salmon, bald eagles, herons, beavers, and numerous rare, indigenous marine and waterfowl species live in the metropolitan area.

During the winter, thousands of bald eagles line the banks of the **Squamish, Cheakamus,** and **Mamquam** rivers to feed on spawning salmon. Contact **Squamish & Howe Sound Visitor Info Centre** (✆ **604/892-9244;** www.squamishchamber.bc.ca) for more information.

The annual summer salmon runs attract more than bald eagles. Tourists also flock to coastal streams and rivers to watch the waters turn red with leaping Coho and sockeye. The salmon are plentiful at the **Capilano Salmon Hatchery** (see "Parks & Gardens," earlier in this chapter), and numerous other fresh waters.

Along the Fraser River delta, more than 250 bird species migrate to or perennially inhabit the **George C. Reifel Sanctuary**'s wetland reserve. Nearby, **Richmond Nature Park** has educational displays for young and first-time birders plus a boardwalk-encircled duck pond.

Stanley Park and **Pacific Spirit Park** are both home to heron rookeries. You can see these large birds nesting just outside the Vancouver Aquarium. Ravens, dozens of species of waterfowl, raccoons, skunks, beavers, and even coyotes are also full-time residents.

WINDSURFING

Windsurfing is not allowed at the mouth of False Creek near Granville Island, but you can bring a board to **Jericho** and **English**

Bay beaches ★ or rent one there. Equipment sales, rentals (including wet suits), and instruction can be found at **Windsure Windsurfing School,** 1300 Discovery St., at Jericho Beach (✆ **604/224-0615**). Rentals start at C$17 (US$11) per hour, wetsuit rental extra.

6 Spectator Sports

Spectators and participants will find plenty of activities in Vancouver. You can get schedule information on all major events at Tourism Vancouver's **Travel Info Centre,** 200 Burrard St. (✆ **604/683-2000**). You can also get information and purchase tickets from Ticketmaster at the **Vancouver Ticket Centre,** 1304 Hornby St. (✆ **604/280-3311**), which has 40 outlets in the greater Vancouver area. (Like every other Ticketmaster, they do charge a fee.) Popular events Canucks games and the Vancouver Indy can sell out weeks or months in advance, so it's a good idea to book ahead.

AUTO RACING

In late July, the CART Indy Series mounts its biggest annual event, the **Molson Indy,** 750 Pacific Blvd. (✆ **604/684-4639** for information, 604/280-4639 for tickets). General admission starts at C$15 (US$9.75), depending on the race day. A 3-day general admission ticket costs C$55 (US$35). The race roars through Vancouver's streets around B.C. Place Stadium and the north and south shores of False Creek, attracting more than 350,000 spectators.

FOOTBALL

The Canadian Football League's **B.C. Lions** (✆ **604/930-5466;** www.bclions.com) play their home and Grey Cup championship games (in good seasons) in the 60,000-seat **B.C. Place Stadium,** 777 Pacific Blvd. S. (at Beatty and Robson sts.). Canadian football differs from its American cousin: It's a three-down offense game on a field that's 10 yards longer and wider. Some of the plays you see will have NFL fans leaping out of their seats in surprise. Tickets run C$20 to C$60 (US$13-US$39).

HOCKEY

The National Hockey League's **Vancouver Canucks** play at **General Motors Place** (otherwise known as the Garage), 800 Griffith's Way (✆ **604/899-4600;** event hot line 604/899-7444; www.canucks.com). Tickets are C$26 to C$95 (US$17-US$62).

HORSE RACING

Thoroughbreds run at **Hastings Park Racecourse,** Exhibition Park, East Hastings and Cassiar streets (✆ **604/254-1631;** www.hastingspark.com), from mid-April to October. Post time varies, please call ahead or check the website for the latest schedule. There is a decent restaurant, so you can make a full evening or afternoon of dining and racing. Place a wager or two.

RUNNING

The **Sun Run** in April and the **Vancouver International Marathon** in May attract many runners from around the world and even more spectators. Contact the **Vancouver International Marathon Society,** 1601 Bayshore Dr., in the Westin Bayshore Hotel (✆ **604/872-2928**), or the **Vancouver Sun Run,** 655 Burrard St. (✆ **604/689-9441**), for information.

SOCCER

The American Professional Soccer League's **Vancouver Whitecaps** (✆ **604/899-9283**) play at Swangard Stadium (✆ **604/435-7121;** www.whitecapssoccer.com) in Burnaby. Admission is normally C$14 to C$22 (US$9-US$14).

6

Shopping

Blessed with a climate that seems semitropical in comparison to the rest of Canada, Vancouverites never really developed a taste for indoor malls. Instead, most residents shop on the street—parking the car or, better yet, leaving it at home—and browse from one window to the next, on the lookout for something new. Below are a few thoughts on where to start exploring.

1 The Shopping Scene

Outside of malls, stores in Vancouver generally open Monday through Saturday from 9am to 6pm. A few exceptions: Stores on Robson Street stay open later (usually until 9pm), while stores in Kitsilano open later (around 10am). On Sundays most stores are open 11am to 6pm, but a few remain closed all day. Malls such as the Pacific Centre are open from 9am to 7pm Monday through Wednesday, 9am to 9pm Thursday through Saturday, and 10am to 6pm on Sunday. Come Christmas shopping season, stores extend their hours from 9am to 9pm 7 days a week.

ROBSON STREET It's been said that the corner of Robson and Burrard gets more foot traffic than any other corner in Canada. Urban myth? Who knows. Anyway, it's a busy, colorful parade of humanity, many from Asia (hence the sushi bars and shops with Japanese signs), most with money. Look for high-end fashions, with a focus on clothes for the younger set.

SOUTH GRANVILLE The 10-block stretch of Granville Street—from Sixth Avenue up to 16th Avenue—is where Vancouver's old-money enclave of Shaughnessy comes to shop. Classic and expensive men's and women's clothiers and housewares and furniture boutiques predominate. This area is also the heart of Vancouver's gallery row.

WATER STREET Though a little too heavy on the knickknack shops, Water Street and Gastown are by no means just a tacky tourist enclave. Look for antique and cutting-edge furniture, galleries of First Nations art, and funky basement retro shops.

MAIN STREET Antiques, and lots of 'em. From about 19th up to 27th, Main Street is chockablock with antiques shops. Rather than outbid each other, the stores have evolved so that each covers a particular niche, from Art Deco to country kitchen to fine Second Empire. It's a fun place to browse, and if your eyes start to glaze over at the thought of yet another divan, the area also has cafes, bookshops, and clothing stores.

GRANVILLE ISLAND A rehabilitated industrial site beneath the Granville Street Bridge, the Public Market is paradoxically one of the best places to pick up salmon and other seafood. It's also a great place to browse for crafts and gifts. Particularly interesting is Kids Market, a kind of mini-mall for children, complete with a Lilliputian entranceway, toy, crafts, and book stores, and play areas and services for the not-yet-10 demographic.

ASIA WEST If you've never been to Hong Kong, or are just itching to get back, this new commercial area on Richmond's No. 3 Road between Capstan and Alderbridge roads is the place to shop. Stores in four new malls—the Yaohan Centre, President Plaza, Aberdeen Centre, and Parker Place—cater to Vancouver's newly arrived Asian community by bringing in goods direct from Asia. If the prices seem a bit high, a simple inquiry is often enough to bring them plummeting down as much as 80%.

PUNJABI MARKET India imported. The 4 blocks of Main Street on either side of 49th Avenue contain the whole of the subcontinent, shrunk down to a manageable parcel. Look for fragrant spice stalls and sari shops and textile outlets selling luxurious fabrics—at bargain-basement prices.

2 Shopping A to Z

ANTIQUES

Bakers Dozen Antiques This charming shop specializes in antique toys, model ships and boats, folk art, and unusual 19th- and early-20th-century furniture. 3520 Main St. ✆ **604/879-3348.**

Mihrab *Finds* Part museum, part subcontinental yard sale, Mihrab specializes in one-of-a-kind Indian antiques for the house and garden. Think intricately carved teak archways or tiny jewel-like door pulls, all selected by partners Lou Johnson and Kerry Lane on frequent trips to the subcontinent. 2229 Granville St. ✆ **604/879-6105.** www.mihrabantiques.com.

Uno Langmann Limited Catering to upscale shoppers, Uno Langmann specializes in European and North American paintings, furniture, silver, and objets d'art from the 18th through early 20th centuries. Open Tuesday through Saturday 10am to 5pm. 2117 Granville St. ✆ **604/736-8825.** www.langmann.com.

Vancouver Antique Centre Housed in a heritage commercial building, this maze contains 14 separate shops on two levels, specializing in everything from china, glass, and jewelry to military objects, sports, toys; '50s and '60s collectibles; home furnishings; and watches. There are even more shops in the neighboring buildings. Open Monday through Saturday 11am to 5:30pm. 422 Richards St. ✆ **604/669-7444.**

BOOKS

Blackberry Books Books about art, architecture, and fine cuisine are the specialties of this Granville Island store, which also has a wide variety of more general categories. New titles are displayed with staff reviews posted beside them. 1663 Duranleau St. ✆ **604/685-4113** or 604/685-6188. www.bbooks.ca.

Chapters Chapters seems to have won folks over with the sheer quality of its book-buying experience—stores are pleasant and well planned, with little nooks and comfy benches; coffee is often available on the ground floor. And though it pains a local booster like myself to say it, Chapters' book selection is—gasp—every bit as good as homegrown favorite Duthie's. 788 Robson St. ✆ **604/682-4066.** www.chapters.ca. Also at 2505 Granville St. (✆ **604/731-7822**).

Duthie Books 4th Ave. Since 1957, this locally owned chain has been synonymous with good books in Vancouver. Though its recent financial troubles and retrenchment have left Duthie's with just one store, it remains a particularly good place to find local authors, in addition to an excellent inventory of Canadian and international titles. The staff is knowledgeable, and the shop offers custom services such as special, by-mail, and out-of-print ordering. 2239 W. Fourth Ave., Kitsilano. ✆ **604/732-5344.** www.duthiebooks.com.

Granville Book Company Located in the heart of Vancouver's entertainment district, this bookstore has a great selection and staff with a true love for books. Generous open hours make this a great spot for browsing after dinner or before a movie. Open daily 9am to midnight. 850 Granville St. ✆ **877/838-BOOK** or 604/687-2213. www.granvillebooks.com.

International Travel Maps and Books *Finds* Best selection of travel books, maps, charts, and globes in town. The selection of special-interest British Columbia guides is impressive, with topics ranging from backcountry skiing and minimum-impact hiking to off-road four-wheeling. This is the hiker's best source for detailed topographic charts of the entire province. One of the city's secret bargains is the bin of free, outdated provincial maps near the door that often includes maps of the parks around Whistler (outside Vancouver, the province changes slowly enough that they're still accurate). 539 West Pender St. ✆ **604/687-3320.** Also at 530 W. Broadway (✆ **604/879-3621**). www.itmb.com.

Kidsbooks *Kids* The largest and most interesting selection of children's literature in the city also has an amazing collection of puppets and regular readings. 3083 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/738-5335.** Also 3040 Edgemont Blvd., North Vancouver (✆ **604/986-6190**).

Little Sister's Book & Art Emporium What makes one book literature and another pornography? To see for yourself, come down and browse this West End bookstore's large selection of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender books, videos, and magazines, as well as its huge adult novelties department. Open daily 9am to 11pm. 1238 Davie St. ✆ **604/669-1753.** www.lsisters.com.

CAMERAS

Dunne & Rundle foto source Dunne & Rundle is conveniently located downtown and can handle repairs for most major brands and sells parts, accessories, and film. 891 Granville St. ✆ **604/681-9254.** www.dunneandrundle.com.

CHINA, SILVER & CRYSTAL

You can find a great array of sophisticated international china and crystal in the downtown stores. On Granville Island you can observe potters, silversmiths, and glassblowers as they work their magic.

Gallery of BC Ceramics This Granville Island gallery loft is owned and operated by the Potters Guild of British Columbia. It presents a lively, juried collection of sculptural and functional ceramic works by close to 100 B.C. potters. The gallery also carries a full range of books for ceramics enthusiasts. Closed on Mondays in January and February. Gallery hours change seasonally, so phone ahead to confirm hours of operation. 1359 Cartwright St. ✆ **604/669-5645.** www.bcpotters.com.

Martha Sturdy Originals *Finds* Local designer Martha Sturdy—once best known for her collectible, usable, handblown glassware trimmed in gold leaf—is now creating a critically acclaimed line of cast-resin housewares, as well as limited-edition couches and chairs. Expensive, but, if you've got the dough, well worth it. 3039 Granville St. ✆ **604/737-0037.** www.marthasturdy.com.

CHINESE GOODS

T&T Supermarket *Finds* Racks and racks of goods you won't find at home (unless your home is China), but the real entertainment is the seafood bins and the produce section, where strange and ungainly comestibles lurk: fire-dragon fruit, lily root, and enoki mushrooms. 181 Keefer St. ✆ **604/899-8836.**

Ten Ren Tea & Ginseng Co. Whether you prefer the pungent aroma of Chinese black or the exotic fragrance of chrysanthemum, jasmine, or ginger flower, you must try the numerous varieties of drinking and medicinal teas in this Chinatown shop. It also carries Korean, American, and Siberian ginseng for a lot less than you might pay elsewhere. 550 Main St. ✆ **604/684-1566.**

Tung Fong Hung Foods Co. *Finds* If you've never been to a Chinese herbalist, this is the one to try: jars, bins, and boxes full of such things as dried sea horse, thinly sliced deer antler, and bird's nest. It's lots of fun to explore and potentially good for what ails you. Chinese remedies can have side effects, however, so before ingesting anything unfamiliar, it's usually wise to consult the on-site herbalist. 536 Main St. ✆ **604/688-0883.**

CIGARS & TOBACCO

Just remember: if they're Cuban, you'll have to light up on this side of the border.

La Casa del Habano Directly across from Planet Hollywood on Robson Street, Casa del Habano has Vancouver's largest walk-in humidor. Cigars range in price from a few dollars to over a hundred. 980 Robson St. ✆ **604/609-0511.** www.lacasadelhabanocanada.com.

Vancouver Cigar Company The selection here is reputed to be the city's most extensive, featuring brands such as Cohiba, Monte Cristo, Macanudo, Hoyo De Monterrey, Romeo y Julieta, Partagas, Ashton, and A. Fuente. The shop also carries a complete line of accessories. 1093 Hamilton St. ✆ **604/685-0445.** www.vancouvercigar.com.

DEPARTMENT STORES

The Bay (Hudson's Bay Company) From the establishment of its early trading posts during the 1670s to its modern coast-to-coast chain, the Bay has built its reputation on quality goods. You can still buy a Hudson's Bay woolen "point" blanket (the colorful stripes originally represented how many beaver pelts each blanket was worth in trade), but you'll also find Tommy Hilfiger, Polo, DKNY, and more. 674 Granville St. ✆ **604/681-6211.** www.hbc.com.

Hills of Kerrisdale *Value* This neighborhood department store in central Vancouver is a city landmark. Carrying full lines of quality men's, women's, and children's clothes, as well as furnishings and sporting goods, it's a destination for locals because the prices are often lower than those in the downtown core. 2125 W. 41st Ave. ✆ **604/266-9177.**

DISCOUNT SHOPPING

The strip of West Fourth Avenue between Cypress and Yew streets has recently emerged as consignment-clothing central. New shops open regularly.

In-Again Clothing *Value* Good variety of seasonal consignment clothing. The selection keeps up with fashion trends. Don't miss the collection of purses, scarves, and belts. 1962 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/738-2782.**

Second Suit for Men & Women *Value* This resale- and sample-clothing store has the best in men's and women's fashions, including Hugo Boss, Armani, Donna Karan, Nautica, Calvin Klein, and Alfred Sung. The inventory changes rapidly. 2036 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/732-0338.**

FASHIONS

FOR CHILDREN

Isola Bella *Kids* This store imports an exclusive collection of rather expensive, high-fashion newborn and children's clothing from designers like Babar, Babymini, Milou, Petit Bateau, and Paul Smith. 5692 Yew St. ✆ **604/266-8808.**

Please Mum *Kids* This Kitsilano store sells attractive Canadian-made toddler's and children's cotton clothing. 2951 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/732-4574.** www.pleasemum.com.

FOR MEN & WOMEN

Vancouver has the Pacific Northwest's best collection of clothes from Paris, London, Milan, and Rome, in addition to a great

assortment of locally made, cutting-edge fashions. International designer outlets include **Chanel Boutique,** 900 W. Hastings St. (✆ **604/682-0522**); **Salvatore Ferragamo,** 918 Robson St. (✆ **604/669-4495**); **Gianni Versace Boutique,** 757 W. Hastings St. (✆ **604/683-1131**); **Polo/Ralph Lauren,** the Landing, 375 Water St. (✆ **604/682-7656**); and **Plaza Escada,** Sinclair Centre, 757 W. Hastings St. (✆ **604/688-8558**).

It seems that almost every week a new designer boutique opens in Yaletown, Kitsilano, or Kerrisdale.

Christine and Company *Finds* More than 20 years ago, Christine Morton started out selling delicate, antique, lacy sleepwear along with a few of her own lingerie creations. She then expanded to silky blouses and heirloom-quality trousseau lingerie. And she's now regarded as the city's hottest bridal-wear designer. 201-657 Marine Dr., West Vancouver. ✆ **604/922-0350.** www.christinevancouver.com.

Dorothy Grant *Finds* Designed to look like a Pacific Northwest longhouse, this shop is where First Nations designer Dorothy Grant exhibits her unique designs as well as her husband's (acclaimed artist Robert Davidson) collection of exquisitely detailed Haida motifs, which she appliqués on coats, leather vests, jackets, caps, and accessories. The clothes are gorgeous and collectible. She also carries contemporary Haida art and jewelry. Check the website for some samples of the collection. Open Monday through Friday 10am to 5:30pm or by appointment. 1656 W. 75th St. (corner of Granville St., near Vancouver's International Airport). ✆ **604/681-0201.** www.dorothygrant.com.

Dream 311 Big-name designs can be found anywhere, but this little shop is one of the few places to show early collections—clothing and jewelry—of local designers. 311 W. Cordova. ✆ **604/683-7326.**

Leone Shop where the stars shop. Versace, Donna Karan, Byblos, Armani, and fabulous Italian and French accessories are sold in this very elegant building; valet parking provided and private after-hours shopping by appointment for VIPs. Sinclair Centre, 757 W. Hastings St. ✆ **604/683-1133.** www.leone.ca.

Roots Canada Proudly Canadian, this chain features sturdy casual clothing. You'll find leather jackets, leather bags, footwear, outerwear, and athletic wear for the whole family. 1001 Robson (corner of Burrard). ✆ **604/683-4305.** www.roots.ca.

Swimco Located near Kitsilano Beach, this store caters to swimmers and sunbathers. You will find a large variety of bikinis and

bathing suits in the latest prints and colors for men, women, and children. 2166 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/732-7946.** www.swimco.com.

Venus & Mars *Finds* Add some drama to your life. This Gastown boutique features Vancouver designer Sanné Lambert's work, specializing in one-of-a-kind handmade gowns and velvet robes. Some plus sizes available. 315 Cambie St. ✆ **604/687-1908.** www.venusandmars.nu.

Zonda Nellis Design Ltd. *Finds* Rich colors and intricate patterns highlight this Vancouver designer's imaginative hand-woven separates, pleated silks, sweaters, vests, and soft knits. Nellis has also introduced a new line of hand-painted silks and sumptuous, sheer hand-painted velvet eveningwear. 2203 Granville St. ✆ **604/736-5668.** www.zondanellis.com.

VINTAGE CLOTHING

Deluxe Junk Co. The name fits—there's tons of junk. Amid the polyester jackets and worn-out dress shirts, however, are some truly great finds. Some real bargains have been known to pop up. 310 W. Cordova St. ✆ **604/685-4871.** www.deluxejunk.com.

Legends Retro-Fashion Specializing in unique retro clothing, Legends is well known among vintage purists for its cache of one-of-a-kind pieces. Most of the clothes, such as evening dresses, shoes, kid gloves, and other accessories, are in immaculate condition. 4366 Main St. ✆ **604/875-0621.**

Tapestry Vintage Clothing Consignment shop with an interesting collection of vintage women's clothing. Open Wednesday through Sunday noon to 6pm. 321 Cambie St., Gastown. ✆ **604/687-1719.**

True Value Vintage Clothing This underground shop has a collection of funky fashions from the 1930s through the 1990s, including tons of fake furs, leather jackets, denim, soccer jerseys, vintage bathing suits, formal wear, smoking jackets, sweaters, and accessories. 710 Robson St. ✆ **604/685-5403.**

FIRST NATIONS ART

You'll find First Nations art all over the city. You don't have to purchase a pricey antique to acquire original Coast Salish or Haida work. As the experts at the **Museum of Anthropology** explain, if an item is crafted by any of the indigenous Pacific Northwest artisans, it's a real First Nations piece of art. The culture is ancient yet still very much alive. Pick up a copy of ***Publication No. 10: A Guide to Buying Contemporary Northwest Coast Art*** by Karen Duffel

(available at the Museum of Anthropology), which details how to identify and care for these beautifully carved, worked, and woven pieces.

Even if you're not in the market, go gallery-hopping to see works by Haida artists **Bill Reid** (the province's best-known Native artist) and **Richard Davidson,** and by Kwakwaka'wakw artist and photographer **David Neel.**

Coastal Peoples Fine Arts Gallery This Yaletown boutique offers an extensive collection of fine First Nations jewelry. The motifs—bear, salmon, whale, raven, and others—are drawn from local myths and translated into 14-karat or 18-karat gold and sterling-silver creations. Inuit sculptures and items made of glass or wood are also worth a look. Custom orders can be filled quickly and shipped worldwide. 1024 Mainland St. ✆ **604/685-9298.** www.coastalpeoples.com.

Images for a Canadian Heritage *Finds* This store and the Inuit Gallery of Vancouver (see below) are government-licensed First Nations art galleries, featuring traditional and contemporary works such as Native designs on glass totems and copper plates. With a museum-worthy collection, this shop deserves a visit whether you're buying or not. 164 Water St. ✆ **604/685-7046.** www.imagesforcanada.com.

Inuit Gallery of Vancouver Home to one of Canada's foremost collections of Inuit and First Nations art. Prices are for serious buyers, but it's worth a visit. 206-220 Water St. ✆ **604/688-7323.**

Leona Lattimer Gallery *Finds* This beautiful gallery presents museum-quality displays of Pacific Northwest First Nations art, including ceremonial masks, totem poles, limited-edition silk-screen prints, argillite sculptures, and expensive gold and silver jewelry. Prices start at a few dollars for an original print and escalate quickly to the three-digit mark for most items. 1590 W. Second Ave. ✆ **604/732-4556.** www.leonalattimer.com.

Marion Scott Gallery For more than 20 years, this gallery has been well regarded for its Inuit (Eskimo) and First Nations art collections. 481 Howe St. ✆ **604/685-1934.** www.marionscottgallery.com.

FIRST NATIONS CRAFTS

Bold, traditional, and innovative geometric designs; intricate carvings; strong primary colors; and rich wood tones are just a few of the elements you'll find in First Nations crafts.

Hill's Native Art In a re-creation of a trading post interior, this shop sells moccasins, ceremonial masks, Cowichan sweaters, wood

sculptures, totem poles (priced up to C$35,000/US$22,581), silkscreen prints, soapstone sculptures, and gold, silver, and argillite jewelry. 165 Water St. ✆ **604/685-4249.** www.hillsnativeart.com.

Khot-La-Cha Salish Handicrafts *Finds* Hand-tanned moosehide crafts, wood carvings, Cowichan sweaters, porcupine-quill jewelry, and bone, silver, gold, and turquoise accessories are just a few of the selections at this Coast Salish crafts shop. Open Monday through Saturday 10am to 5pm. 270 Whonoak St., North Vancouver. ✆ **604/987-3339.** Turn South on Capilano Rd. (off Marine Dr.) and turn first left (Whonoak is parallel to Capilano Rd).

Museum of Anthropology Works by contemporary First Nations artisans as well as books about the culture and publications on identifying and caring for Pacific Northwest crafts. University of British Columbia, 6393 NW Marine Dr. ✆ **604/822-5087.**

FOOD

You'll find **salmon** everywhere in Vancouver. Many shops package whole, fresh salmon with ice packs for visitors to take home. Shops also carry delectable smoked salmon in travel-safe, vacuum-packed containers. Some offer decorative cedar gift boxes; most offer overnight air transport. Try other salmon treats such as salmon jerky and Indian candy (chunks of marinated smoked salmon), which are available at public markets such as **Lonsdale Quay Market** and **Granville Island Public Market.**

And even though salmon is the most popular item to buy in Vancouver, coffee flows like water—as does Belgian chocolate.

Chocolate Arts *Finds* The works at this West Fourth Avenue chocolatier are made with exquisite craftsmanship. Seasonal treats include pumpkin truffles around Halloween or eggnog truffles for Christmas. They even make chocolate toolboxes filled with tiny chocolate tools. Look for the all-chocolate diorama in the window—it changes every month or so. Native masks of thick dark chocolate make great gifts. 2037 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/739-0475.**

The Lobsterman Live lobsters, Dungeness crabs, oysters, mussels, clams, geoducks, and scallops are just a few of the varieties of seafood swimming in the saltwater tanks at this Granville Island fish store. The staff steams the food fresh on the spot, free. Salmon and other seafood can also be packed for air travel. 1807 Mast Tower Rd. ✆ **604/687-4531.** www.lobsterman.com.

Murchie's Tea & Coffee This Vancouver institution has been the city's main tea and coffee purveyor for more than a century. You'll find

everything from Jamaican Blue Mountain and Kona coffees to Lapsang Souchong and Kemun teas. The knowledgeable staff will help you decide which flavors and blends fit your taste. There's also a fine selection of bone china and crystal serving ware as well as coffeemakers and teapots. 970 Robson St. ✆ **604/669-0783.** www.murchies.com.

Salmon Village For those wanting to pick up some salmon to take home, Salmon Village has a good selection from which to choose. Smoked salmon or jerky are vacuum sealed for travel, and fresh salmon can be packed in an icebox or (for a price) shipped to you anywhere on the planet. 779 Thurlow St. ✆ **604/685-3378.** www.salmonvillage.com.

South China Seas Trading Company The South Seas have always been a source of intrigue. This shop re-creates a bit of that wonder, with a remarkable collection of rare spices and hard-to-find sauces. Look for fresh kaffir lime leaves, Thai basil, young ginger, sweet Thai chili sauce, and occasional exotic produce like mangosteens and rambutans. Pick up recipes and ideas from the knowledgeable staff. Granville Island Public Market. ✆ **604/681-5402.**

GALLERIES

On the first Thursday of every month, many galleries host free openings from 5 to 8pm. Check the *Georgia Straight* or *Vancouver Magazine* for listings or **www.art-bc.com** for more details on Vancouver's art scene.

Buschlen Mowatt The city's leading "establishment" gallery. Look for paintings, sculptures, and prints from well-known Canadian and international artists. 111-1445 W. Georgia St. ✆ **604/682-1234.** www.buschlenmowatt.com.

Diane Farris Gallery Contemporary painting and sculpture, from up-and-coming artists and those who already have arrived. 1590 W. Seventh Ave. ✆ **604/737-2629.** www.dianefarrisgallery.com.

Monte Clark Gallery *Value* This cutting-edge gallery—in the otherwise slightly staid confines of south Granville's gallery row—is one of the best spots to look for that rising superstar without the rising prices. 2339 Granville St. ✆ **604/730-5000.** www.monteclarkgallery.com.

GIFTS & SOUVENIRS

Buddha Supply Centre *Finds* Want money to burn? At Chinese funerals people burn joss—paper replicas of earthly belongings—to help make the afterlife for the deceased more comfortable. This shop has more than 500 combustible products to choose from,

including $1-million notes (drawn on the bank of hell), luxury penthouse condos, and that all-important cellphone. 4158 Main St. ✆ **604/873-8169.**

Escents Beautifully displayed, the large collection of soaps, bath oils, shampoos, and other body products here come in a variety of scents, such as the fresh ginger-citrus twist or the relaxing lavender sea. Locally produced and made with minimal packaging, the all-natural environmentally friendly products come in convenient sizes and prices. 1172 Robson St. ✆ **604/682-0041.** www.escentsaromatherapy.com.

The Ocean Floor If you want to bring home a few gifts from the sea, then select from this Granville Island shop's collection of seashells, ship models, lamps, chimes, coral, shell jewelry, stained glass, and marine brass. 1522 Duranleau St., Granville Island ✆ **604/681-5014.**

JEWELRY

Costen Catbalue *Finds* One-of-a-kind pieces in platinum and gold are made on the premises by a team of four goldsmiths and artists Mary Ann Buis and Andrew Costen. The two artists' styles complement each other; Buis favors contemporary and clean lines, and Costen's designs tend towards a more ornate renaissance style. 1832 West 1st Ave. ✆ **604/734-3259.**

Forge & Form Master Granville Island metal designers Dietje Hagedoorn and Jürgen Schönheit specialize in customized gold and silver jewelry. Renowned for their gold and silver bow ties, they also create unique pieces like "tension set" rings, which hold a stone in place without a setting. Their studio is located just past the False Creek Community Centre. 1334 Cartwright St. ✆ **604/684-6298.**

Karl Stittgen and Goldsmiths *Finds* Stittgen's gold pins, pendants, rings, and other accessories demonstrate his eye for clean, crisp design and fine craftsmanship. Each work is a miniature architectural wonder. 2203 Granville St. ✆ **604/737-0029.**

The Raven and the Bear If you've never seen West Coast Native jewelry, it's worth making a trip. Deeply inscribed with stylized creatures from Northwest mythology, these rings, bangles, and earrings are unforgettable. (See also "First Nations Art," above.) 1528 Duranleau St. ✆ **604/669-3990.**

MALLS & SHOPPING CENTERS

Pacific Centre Mall This 3-block complex contains 200 shops and services, including Godiva, Benetton, Crabtree & Evelyn, and Eddie Bauer. 700 W. Georgia St. ✆ **604/688-7236.**

Park Royal Shopping Centre Park Royal consists of two malls that face each other on Marine Drive, just west of the Lions Gate Bridge. Gap, Coast Mountain Sports, Cypress Mountain Sports, Future Shop, Marks & Spencer, Disney, Eaton's, the Bay, Eddie Bauer, and a public market are just a few of the 250 stores in the center. Cinemas, bowling lanes, a golf driving range, community and special events, and a food court are next door. 2002 Park Royal S., West Vancouver. ✆ **604/925-9576.** www.shopparkroyal.com.

Sinclair Centre The Sinclair Centre incorporates four Vancouver landmarks: the Post Office (1910), Winch Building (1911), Customs Examining Warehouse (1913), and Federal Building (1937). Now restored, they house elite shops like Armani and Leone, as well as smaller boutiques, art galleries, and a food court. 757 W. Hastings St. ✆ **604/659-1009.** www.sinclaircentre.com.

Vancouver Centre The Bay, restaurants, a food fair, and more than 115 specialty stores connect underground to the adjoining Pacific Centre Mall (see above). 650 W. Georgia St. ✆ **604/688-5658.**

MARKETS

There are **green markets** scattered throughout the city. There's also a huge **flea market** in an old warehouse by the railway tracks, with as great a mix of stuff as you could possibly imagine.

Chinatown Night Market *Value* Across Asia, prime shopping time comes only after the sun has gone down and the temperature has dropped to something bearable. Friday and Saturday nights May through September, merchants in Chinatown bring the tradition to Canada by closing two separate blocks to traffic and covering them with booths, tables, and food stalls offering all manner of things, useful and otherwise. Come down, grab a juicy satay skewer, sip the juice from a freshly cracked coconut, and see what's up. 200 Keefer St. and 200 E. Pender St. Phone the Vancouver Tourism Info Centre at ✆ **604/683-2000.**

Granville Island Public Market *Finds* This 50,000-square-foot public market features produce, meats, fish, wines, cheeses, arts and crafts, and lots of fast-food counters offering a little of everything. The market is open daily 9am to 6pm. From mid-June to September, the Farmers' Truck Market operates here Thursday from 9am to 6pm. 1669 Johnston St. ✆ **604/666-6477.** www.granvilleisland.com.

Lonsdale Quay Market *Kids* Located at the SeaBus terminal, this public market is filled with produce, meats, fish, specialty fashions, gift shops, food counters, coffee bars, a hotel, and Kids' Alley

(a section dedicated to children's shops and a play area). The upper floor houses a variety of fashion stores, bookstores, and gift shops. 123 Carrie Cates Court, North Vancouver. ✆ **604/985-6261.** www.lonsdalequay.com.

New Westminster Quay Public Market A smaller version of Granville Island, it is located 25 minutes away by SkyTrain from downtown Vancouver. The market has a variety of gift shops, specialty stores, a food court, a delicatessen, and produce stands. Once finished browsing the market, make sure to have a gander at the neighboring Fraser River. A walkway extends along the river and allows great views of the waterfront, the busy boat traffic, and the occasional seal or sea lion. 810 Quayside, New Westminster. ✆ **604/520-3881.**

Vancouver Flea Market *Value* Near the train/bus terminal, Vancouver's largest flea market boasts more than 350 stalls. Admittedly, most are stocked with cheap T-shirts, linens, used tools, and such, but it's still possible to discover some real finds. Go early or the savvy shoppers will have already cleaned out the real gems. Open weekends and holidays 9am to 5pm. 703 Terminal Ave. ✆ **604/685-0666.** Admission C60¢ (US40¢), free for children under 12.

MUSIC

The Magic Flute Located in the heart of Kitsilano's Fourth Avenue shopping area, the Magic Flute carries a large selection of classical music, including recordings of local choirs and orchestras. The collection also includes jazz, world music, and soundtracks. Listening stations allow you to "browse" before you buy. 2203 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/736-2727.** www.magicflute.com.

Virgin Megastore With over 150,000 titles housed in a three-story, 42,000-square-foot space, it's Canada's largest music and entertainment store. 788 Burrard St. at Robson St. ✆ **604/669-2289.** www.virginmega.com.

Zulu Records *Finds* A few blocks east of the Magic Flute, Zulu Records specializes in alternative music, local and import, new and used. You will also find a good selection of vinyl and magazines. The staff is happy to make recommendations and bring you up to speed on what's hot in the local music scene. 1972 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/738-3232.** www.zulurecords.com.

SHOES

David Gordon This may be Vancouver's oldest Western boot, hat, and accessories store, but it's far from stodgy. Boots include an

extensive selection of Tony Lama, Boulet, Durango, HH Brown, and Dan Post. You'll also find Vans, Doc Martens, and a lineup of other funky footwear that attracts skateboarders and club kids. 822 Granville St. ✆ **604/685-3784.**

John Fluevog Boots & Shoes Ltd. This native Vancouverite has a growing international cult following of designers and models clamoring for his under-C$200 (US$129) urban and funky creations. You'll find outrageous platforms and clogs, Angelic Sole work boots, and a few bizarre experiments for the daring footwear fetishist. 837 Granville St. ✆ **604/688-2828.** www.fluevog.com.

SPECIALTY

Lush Although it has the look of an old-fashioned deli store with big wheels of cheese, slabs of sweets, chocolate bars, dips, and sauces, take a bite and you'd be washing your mouth with soap—literally. All these beautiful, mouthwatering displays are indeed soaps, shampoos, skin treatments, massage oils, and bath bombs. Made from all natural ingredients, these deceptively real looking treats are the perfect pampering gift. 1025 Robson St. ✆ **604/687-5874.** www.lushcanada.com.

The Market Kitchen Store Everything you'd like to have on your kitchen counters or in your kitchen drawers—gourmet kitchen accessories, baking utensils, and gadgets. Anyone need a citrus zester? 2-1666 Johnston (Net Loft, Granville Island). ✆ **604/681-7399.**

Spy-Central *Finds* A haven for spies, paranoids, and the just plain snoopy, Spy-Central offers cellphone scanners, miniature cameras, and night-vision gear. Clumsy shoppers take note: If you break it, they know your credit-card number. 788 Beatty St. ✆ **604/642-0324.**

Three Dog Bakery Beagle Bagels, Scottie Biscotti, or Gracie's Rollovers. Canines will have a hard time deciding on a favorite treat from this gone-to-the-dogs bakery. The store also has leashes, collars, greeting cards, and other dog paraphernalia. 2186 W. Fourth Ave. ✆ **604/737-3647.** www.threedog.com.

SPORTING GOODS

A 2-block area near the Mountain Equipment Co-op (see below) has now become Outdoor Central, with at least a half-dozen stores such as **Altus Mountain Gear** (137 W. Broadway; ✆ **604/876-25255**); **Great Outdoors Equipment** (222 W. Broadway; ✆ **604/872-8872**); and **AJ Brooks** (147 W. Broadway; ✆ **604/874-1117**). Just a block north on 8th Ave., you'll find **Taiga** (380 W. 8th Ave.; ✆ **604/875-8388**) for inexpensive fleece and other quality outdoor gear.

Boardhead Central Not a shop, but a phenomenon. In the past few years, the corner of Fourth Avenue and Burrard Street has become the spot for high-quality snow/skate/surf board gear and the spot to see top-level boarders and their groupies hanging out. **Pacific Boarder:** 1793 W. Fourth Ave. (✆ **604/734-7245**). **Thriller:** 1710 W. Fourth Ave. (✆ 604/736-5651). **West Beach:** 1766 W. Fourth Ave. (✆ 604/731-6449); sometimes hosts pro-skate demos on the half-pipe at the back of the store.

Comor Sports "Go play outside" is Comor's motto, and they certainly have the goods to get you out there having fun. Pick up some skateboard garb, swimwear, or hiking shoes to enjoy the sunshine. Need in-line skates? The staff can assist you in choosing from the overwhelmingly large collection of wheels. Winter fiends can load up on warm fleece, skis, and boards, as well as other snow toys. 1090 W. Georgia St. ✆ **604/899-2111.** www.comorsports.com.

Mountain Equipment Co-op A true West Coast institution and an outdoors lover's dream come true, this block-long store houses the best selection of top-quality outdoor gear: rain gear, clothing, hiking shoes, climbing gear, backpacks, sleeping bags, tents, and more. Memorize the MEC label; you're sure to see it later—at the beach, the bar, the concert hall. 130 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/872-7858.** www.mec.ca.

TOYS

The Games People *Kids* The Games People carries a huge selection of board games, strategy games, role-playing games, puzzles, models, toys, hobby materials, and other amusements. It's difficult to walk past this store, whether you're an adult or a kid. 157 Water St. ✆ **604/685-5825.**

Kids Market *Kids* Probably the only mall in North America dedicated to kids, the Kids Market on Granville Island features a Lilliputian entranceway, toy and craft and book stores, play areas, and services for the younger set, including even a "fun hairdresser." 1496 Cartwright St. (on Granville Island). ✆ **604/689-8447.** www.kidsmarket.ca.

Kites on Clouds *Kids* This little Gastown shop has every type of kite. Prices range from C$10 to C$20 (US$6.50-US$13) for nylon or Mylar dragon kites to just under C$200 (US$129) for more elaborate ghost clippers and nylon hang-glider kites. The Courtyard, 131 Water St. ✆ **604/669-5677.**

WINE

British Columbia's **wines** are worth buying by the case, especially rich, honey-thick ice wines, such as Jackson-Triggs gold-medal-winning 1994 Johannesburg Riesling Ice wine, and bold reds, such as the Quail's Gate 1994 Limited Release Pinot Noir. Five years of restructuring, reblending, and careful tending by French and German master vintners have won the province's vineyards world recognition.

When buying B.C. wine, look for the VQA (Vintner Quality Alliance) seal on the label; it's a guarantee that all grapes used are grown in British Columbia and meet European standards for growing and processing.

Summerhill, Cedar Creek, Mission Hill, and **Okanagan Vineyards** are just a few of the more than 50 local estates producing hearty cabernet sauvignons, honey-rich ice wines, and oaky merlots. These wines can be found at any government-owned **LCB** liquor store, such as the one at 1716 Robson St. (✆ **604/660-4576**) and at some privately owned wine stores.

Marquis Wine Cellars The owner and staff of this West End wine shop are dedicated to educating their patrons about wines. They conduct evening wine tastings, featuring selections from their special purchases. They also publish monthly newsletters. In addition to carrying a full range of British Columbian wines, the shop also has a large international selection. 1034 Davie St. ✆ **604/684-0445** or 604/685-2246. www.marquis-wines.com.

The Okanagan Estate Wine Cellar This department store annex, located in the Vancouver Centre mall concourse's Market Square, offers a great selection of British Columbian wines by bottle and case. The Bay, 674 Granville St. ✆ **604/681-6211.**

7 Vancouver After Dark

Vancouver is a fly-by-the-seat-of-the-pants kind of town. There's so much to see and do—and the outdoors always beckons—that Vancouverites wait till the day or the hour before a show to plunk their cash down on the barrel. It drives promoters crazy. Vancouver is blessed with entertainment options, from cutting-edge theater companies to a well-respected opera and symphony to folk and jazz festivals that draw people from up and down the coast. And then there are the bars and pubs and clubs and cafes—lots of them—for every taste, budget, and fetish; you just have to get out there and see.

For an overview of Vancouver's nightlife, pick up a copy of the weekly tabloid, the ***Georgia Straight.*** Or get a copy of ***Xtra! West,*** the free gay and lesbian biweekly tabloid, available in shops and restaurants throughout the West End. The Thursday edition of the *Vancouver Sun* contains the weekly entertainment section ***Queue.*** The monthly ***Vancouver Magazine*** is filled with listings and strong views about what's really hot in the city. Check out their website, www.vanmag.com.

The **Vancouver Cultural Alliance Arts Hotline,** 100-938 Howe St. (✆ **604/684-2787** or 604/681-3535; www.allianceforarts.com), is a great information source for all performing arts, literary events, and art films, including where and how to get tickets. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Ticketmaster (Vancouver Ticket Centre), 1304 Hornby St. (✆ **604/280-3311;** www.ticketmaster.ca), has 40 outlets in the Vancouver area.

1 The Performing Arts

Three major theaters in Vancouver regularly host touring performances. The **Orpheum Theatre,** 801 Granville St. (✆ **604/665-3050;** www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/theatres/orpheum/orpheum.html), is an elegant 1927 theater that originally hosted the Chicago-based Orpheum vaudeville circuit. The theater also hosts pop, rock, and variety shows. The **Queen Elizabeth Complex,** 600 Hamilton St.,

between Georgia and Dunsmuir streets (✆ **604/665-3050;** www.city.vancouver.bc.ca), comprises the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and the Vancouver Playhouse. It hosts major national and touring musical and theater productions. It's also home to the Vancouver Opera and Ballet British Columbia. The 670-seat Vancouver Playhouse presents chamber-music performances and recitals. Located in a converted turn-of-the-20th-century church, the **Vancouver East Cultural Centre** (the "Cultch" to locals), 1895 Venables St. (✆ **604/251-1363;** www.vecc.bc.ca), coordinates an impressive program that includes avant-garde theater productions, performances by international musical groups, festivals and cultural events, children's programs, and art exhibitions.

On the campus of UBC, the **Chan Centre for the Performing Arts,** 6265 Crescent Rd. (✆ **604/822-2697;** www.chancentre.com), showcases the work of the UBC music and acting students and also hosts a winter concert series. Designed by local architectural luminary, Bing Thom, the Chan Centre's crystal-clear acoustics are the best in town.

THEATER

Theater isn't only an indoor pastime here. There is an annual summertime Shakespeare series, **Bard on the Beach,** in Vanier Park (✆ **604/737-0625**). You can also bring a picnic dinner to Stanley Park and watch **Theatre Under the Stars** (see below), which features popular musicals and light comedies.

Arts Club Theatre Company The 425-seat Granville Island Mainstage presents major dramas, comedies, and musicals, with post-performance entertainment in the Backstage Lounge. The Arts Club Revue Stage is an intimate, cabaret-style showcase for small productions, improvisation nights, and musical revues such as *The Cripple of Inishmaan* and *The Threepenny Opera.* The smaller Art Deco Stanley Theatre has recently undergone a glorious renovation and now plays host to longer running plays and musicals, such as *The Mousetrap* and *My Fair Lady.* The box office is open 9am to 7pm. Granville Island Stage, 1585 Johnston St., and The Stanley Theatre, 2750 Granville St. ✆ **604/687-1644.** www.artsclub.com. Tickets C$13-C$45 (US$8.45-US$29). Senior, student, and group discounts available.

The Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts Originally built as the Ford Centre in 1996, this theatre was hailed as Vancouver's newest prime entertainment venue but the final call came soon when its owner went bankrupt. The good-as-new, hardly

Finds Art on the Edge

For more original performance fare, don't miss **The Fringe—Vancouver's Theatre Festival** (✆ **604/257-0350;** www.vancouverfringe.com). Centered on Granville Island, the Fringe Festival features more than 500 innovative and original shows each September, all costing under C$12 (US$7.80).

used theater sat empty until the spring of 2002. The new owners, four brothers from Hong Kong who now reside in Colorado, have given the venue a new life and are once again bringing big productions to town. Check the calendar or contact Ticketmaster for an updated schedule. 777 Homer St. ✆ **604/602-0616.** www.centrein vancouver.com. Tickets C$25-C$70 (US$16-US$46). Tickets available through Ticketmaster only; call ✆ **604/280-3311.**

Firehall Arts Centre Housed in Vancouver's Firehouse No. 1, the Centre has for 20 years been home to the cutting-edge Firehall Theatre Company. Expect original and experimental plays, such as last year's hit *Filthy Rich* by George F. Walker and Kudelka's *Janus/Janis.* Dance events, arts festivals, and concerts are also staged here. The box office is open Monday through Friday 9:30am to 5pm and for one hour before the show begins. 280 E. Cordova St. ✆ **604/689-0926.** www.firehall.org. Tickets C$8-C$18 (US$5.20-US$12). Senior and student discounts available.

Frederic Wood Theatre *Value* Forget that "student production" thing you've got in your head. Students at UBC are actors in training, and their productions are extremely high-caliber. For the price, they're a steal. Their presentations range from classic dramatic works to Broadway musicals to new plays by Canadian playwrights. The box office is open Monday through Friday 10:30am to 3pm. All shows start at 7:30pm. There are no performances during the summer. Gate 4, University of British Columbia. ✆ **604/822-2678.** www.theatre.ubc.ca. Tickets C$16 (US$10) adults, C$10 (US$6.50) students and seniors.

Theatre Under the Stars From mid-July to mid-August, old-time favorite musicals like *Annie Get Your Gun, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat, West Side Story, South Pacific,* and *Grease* are performed outdoors by a mixed cast of amateur and professional actors. Bring a blanket (it gets cold once the sun sets) and a picnic dinner for a relaxing evening of summer entertainment. The box office is open Monday through Saturday 10am to 5pm and

7 to 8pm. Malkin Bowl, Stanley Park. ✆ **604/257-0366** or 604/687-0174. www.tuts.bc.ca. Tickets C$23 (US$15) adults, C$17 (US$11) seniors and youth, C$10 (US$6.50) children 6-10.

Vancouver Playhouse Well into its third decade, the company at the Vancouver Playhouse presents a program of six plays each season, usually a mix of the internationally known, nationally recognized, and locally promising. The box office opens 30 minutes before show time. You can also buy tickets over the phone through **Ticketmaster** at ✆ **604/280-4444.** 600 Hamilton, between Georgia and Hamilton sts. in the Queen Elizabeth complex. ✆ **604/665-3050.** www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/theatres. Tickets usually C$8-C$16 (US$5.20-US$10). Senior and student discounts available.

OPERA

Vancouver Opera In a kind of willful flirtation with death, the Vancouver Opera Company alternates between obscure or new (and Canadian!) works and older, more popular perennials, often sung by international stars such as Placido Domingo and Bryn Terfel. The formula seems to work, as the company is over 35 years old and still packing 'em in. The season runs October through May, with performances normally in the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. In 2003, look for Strauss' *Elektra* (Mar 22-29) and crowd-pleaser *La Boheme* by Puccini (May 3-12). The fall performances had not been announced as of press time. The box office is open Monday through Friday 9am to 4pm. 500-845 Cambie St. ✆ **604/683-0222.** www.vanopera.bc.ca. Tickets usually C$36-C$96 (US$23-US$62).

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Fans of chamber music, baroque fugues, Russian romantic symphonies, and popular show tunes will find world-class concert performances in Vancouver.

University of British Columbia School of Music September through November and during January and March, UBC presents eight faculty and guest-artist concerts. They feature piano, piano and violin, opera, or quartets, plus occasional performances by acts like the Count Basie Orchestra. If the concert is in the Chan Centre, go. There are few halls in the world with such beautiful acoustics. Recital Hall, Gate 4, 6361 Memorial Rd. ✆ **604/822-5574.** www.music.ubc.ca. Tickets purchased at the door C$4-C$24 (US$2.60-US$15) adults, C$4-C$14 (US$2.60-US$9.10) seniors and students. Many concerts are free. The Wed noon hour series costs C$4 (US$2.60).

Vancouver Bach Choir Vancouver's international, award-winning amateur choir, a 150-voice ensemble, presents five major concerts a year at the Orpheum Theatre. Specializing in symphonic choral music, the Choir's sing-along performance of Handel's *Messiah* during the Christmas season is a favorite. 805-235 Keith Rd., West Vancouver. ✆ **604/921-8012.** www.vancouverbachchoir.com. Tickets C$20-C$35 (US$13-US$23) depending on the performance. Tickets available through Ticketmaster at ✆ **604/280-4444.**

Vancouver Cantata Singers This semiprofessional, 40-person choir specializes in early music. The company performs works by Bach, Brahms, Monteverdi, Stravinsky, and Handel, as well as Eastern European choral music. The season normally includes three programs: in October, December, and March at various locations. 5115 Keith Rd., West Vancouver. ✆ **604/921-8588.** www.cantata.org. Tickets C$20 (US$13) adults, C$16 (US$10) seniors and students. Tickets at Ticketmaster (✆ **604/280-4444**) or at the door.

Vancouver Chamber Choir Western Canada's only professional choral ensemble presents an annual concert series at the Orpheum Theatre, the Chan Centre, and Ryerson United Church. Under conductor John Washburn, the choir has gained an international reputation. 1254 W. Seventh Ave. ✆ **604/738-6822.** www.vancouverchamberchoir.com. Tickets C$15-C$35 (US$9.75-US$23) adults, C$13-C$25 (US$8.45-US$16) seniors and students. Tickets through Ticketmaster at ✆ **604/280-4444.**

Vancouver New Music This company presents seven annual concerts, featuring the works of contemporary and avant-garde composers as well as mixed-media performances that combine dance and film. Performances take place at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre between September and June. The society also hosts an annual new-music festival, the next one taking place in the last week of October 2003. 837 Davie St. ✆ **604/663-0861.** www.newmusic.org. Tickets C$20-C$35 (US$13-US$23) adults, C$16 (US$10) students.

Vancouver Symphony At its home in the Orpheum Theatre during the fall, winter, and spring, Vancouver's active orchestra presents the "Masterworks" series of great classical works; "Casual Classics," featuring light classics from a single area or composer and a casually dressed orchestra; "Tea & Trumpets," highlighting modern classics and ethnic works, hosted by the CBC's Otto Lowy; "Symphony Pops," selections of popular and show tunes; and "Kid's Koncerts," a series geared toward school-age children. The traveling summer concert series takes the orchestra from White Rock and Cloverdale on the U.S. border to the tops of Whistler and

Blackcomb Mountains. The box office is open Monday through Friday 1 to 5pm. On the day of the performance the box office is open from 6pm until show time. 601 Smithe St. ✆ **604/876-3434** for ticket information. www.vancouversymphony.ca. Tickets C$22-C$60 (US$14-US$39) adults. Senior and student discounts available.

DANCE

The recently opened **Scotiabank Dance Centre** provides a new focus point for the Vancouver dance community. Renovated by Arthur Erickson, the former bank building now offers studio and rehearsal space to more than 30 dance companies and is open to the general public for events, workshops, and classes. 677 Davie St. For more information, call ✆ **604/606-6400** or check www.vkool.com/dancentre.

For fans of modern and original dance, the time to be here is early July, when the **Dancing on the Edge Festival** (✆ **604/689-0691;** www.dancingontheedge.org) presents 60 to 80 envelope-pushing original pieces over a 10-day period. For more information about other festivals and dance companies around the city, call the **Dance Centre** at ✆ **604/606-6400.**

Ballet British Columbia Just over 16 years old, this company strives to present innovative works, such as those by choreographers John Cranko and William Forsythe, along with more traditional fare, including productions by visiting companies, such as the American Ballet Theatre, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and the Moscow Classical Ballet. Performances are usually at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, at 600 Hamilton St. 1101 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/732-5003.** www.balletbc.com. Tickets C$23-C$47 (US$15-US$30) adults. Senior and student discounts available.

2 Laughter & Music

COMEDY CLUBS

Vancouver TheatreSports League Part comedy, part theater, and partly a take-no-prisoner's test of an actor's ability to think extemporaneously, TheatreSports involves actors taking suggestions from the audience and spinning them into short skits or full plays, often with hilarious results. Since moving to the Arts Club Stage, Vancouver's TheatreSports leaguers have had to rein in their normally raunchy instincts for the more family-friendly audience—except, that is, for Friday and Saturday at 11:45pm, when the Red-Hot Improv show takes the audience into the R-rated realm.

New Revue Stage, Granville Island. ✆ **604/687-1644.** www.vtsl.com. Shows Wed-Thurs 7:30pm, Fri-Sat 8, 10, and 11:45pm. Weekends C$15 (US$9.75) adults, C$12(US$7.80) seniors and students; weeknights C$13 (US$8.45) adults, C$9.75 (US$6.30) seniors and students.

Yuk Yuk's Komedy Kabaret A constantly changing lineup of leading Canadian and American stand-up comics play at Yuk Yuk's. Amateurs take the stage for Tuesday night open mike. In the 200-seat theater, it's hard to get a bad seat. Plaza of Nations, 750 Pacific Blvd. ✆ **604/687-5233.** www.yukyuks.com. Shows Tues-Thurs 9pm, Fri-Sat 9 and 11pm. Cover C$5-C$10 (US$3.25-US$6.50).

STRICTLY LIVE

Besides the listings below, every June the **Vancouver International Jazz Festival** (✆ **604/872-5200;** www.jazzvancouver.com) takes over many venues and outdoor locations around town. The festival includes a number of free concerts. The **Vancouver Folk Festival** (✆ **800/986-8363** or 604/602-9798; www.thefestival.bc.ca) takes place outdoors in July on the beach at Jericho Park. The **Coastal Jazz and Blues Society,** the organizer of the Jazz Festival**,** 316 W. Sixth Ave. (✆ **604/872-5200;** www.jazzvancouver.com), has information on current and upcoming events throughout the year.

The Commodore Ballroom Every town should have one, but sadly very few do: a huge old-time dance hall, complete with a suspended hardwood dance floor that bounces gently up and down beneath your nimble or less-than-nimble toes. And though the room and floor date back to the jazz age, the lineup nowadays includes many of the best modern bands coming through town. Sightlines are excellent. Indeed, the Commodore is one of the best places we know to catch a midsize band—and thanks to a recent renovation, the room looks better than ever. 868 Granville St. ✆ **604/739-7469.** www.commodoreballroom.com. Tickets C$5-C$50 (US$3.25-US$32).

The Roxy Live bands play every day of the week in this casual club, which also features show-off bartenders with Tom Cruise *Cocktail*-style moves. The house bands Joe's Garage and Dr. Strangelove keep the Roxy packed, and on weekends the lines are long. Theme parties (often with vacation giveaways), Extreme Karaoke, Canadian content, '80s only, and other events add to the entertainment. 932 Granville St. ✆ **604/684-7699.** www.roxyvan.com. Cover C$4-C$8 (US$2.60-US$5.20).

The WISE Club *Finds* Folk, folk, and more folk. In the far-off reaches of East Vancouver (okay, Commercial Dr. area), the WISE

Club was unplugged long before MTV ever thought of reaching for the power cord. Bands are local and international, and the room's a lot of fun—like a church basement or community center—with alcohol. 1882 Adanac St. ✆ **604/254-5858.** Cover depends on show; C$15 (US$9.75) for most bands.

Yale Hotel This century-old tavern on the far south end of Granville is Vancouver's one and only home of the blues. Visiting heavyweights have included Koko Taylor, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Junior Wells, and Jeff Healey. The pictures in the entryway are a who's who of the blues. When outside talent's not available, the Yale makes do with what's homegrown, including Long John Baldry and local bluesman Jim Byrne. There are shows Monday through Saturday at 9:30pm. On Saturday and Sunday, there is an open-stage blues jam from 3 to 7pm. 1300 Granville St. ✆ **604/681-9253.** www.theyale.ca. Cover Thurs-Sat C$3-C$15 (US$1.95-US$9.75).

ALMOST LIVE

Over the past few years, DJs have slowly replaced bands on the local music scene. Bars that exclusively book live music are nearly nonexistent; many places feature DJs only, and a few offer a mix.

Dine and Dance For an old-fashioned night of dinner and dancing, try the Pan Pacific's Dine and Dance event. Every Saturday the Café Pacificat features an excellent seafood dinner buffet and tunes from the golden era of Big Band. The floor to ceiling windows provide a spectacular backdrop of ocean and mountains to the dance floor as couples spin and jive to the music, a great way to work up an appetite for seconds at the dessert buffet. Bands start playing at 8:30 pm. 300-999 Canada Place. ✆ **604/662-8111.** Seafood buffet C$45 (US$29) per person, 6:30-11:30pm.

Hot Jazz Society *Finds* Playing everything from Dixieland to swing, Latin to progressive, this club caters to fans of both jazz and dance. The dance floor is packed no matter who's playing. On Tuesday nights the Wow Big Band plays swing tunes, and on Thursday nights dance lessons are included in the price of admission. Call for the weekly calendar. 2120 Main St. ✆ **604/873-4131.** Cover C$4-C$12 (US$2.60-US$7.80) for special acts; otherwise no cover.

The Purple Onion Some clubs have DJs, some have bands; the Onion serves up both, all for the same cover. The Club room is a dance floor pure and simple. At the moment, an '80s dance party is alternating nights with house. Monday is Underground Brit night, with the DJ spinning the tunes of Radiohead and Bowie. Down

the hall and round a left turn is the Lounge, where the house band squeals out funky danceable jazz for a slightly older crowd three nights a week. During the Jazz Festival, this place hops. 15 Water St. ✆ **604/602-9442.** www.purpleonion.com. Cover C$5-C$8 (US$3.25-US$5.20).

3 Bars, Pubs & Other Watering Holes

Though things are finally improving, when it comes to liquor regulations, our city is still a bizarre and Byzantine place. For historical and political reasons too difficult to get into, bars and pubs are still seen by officialdom as a Bad Thing, so new pub licenses are next to impossible to come by. What are available are restaurant licenses and, as Vancouverites love a drink as much as anyone, there are many restaurants that look suspiciously like pubs. For years, patrons in a restaurant could only drink if they were eating or—here's the Kafkaesque kicker—had the intention of eating. That regulation was just recently taken off the books, but there are still lots of rules about liquor and food sales ratios and other such bureaucratic bunk. So, if a waitress in a place that looks for all the world like a pub asks if you'll be eating, take the appetizer menu, smile, and say "Yes." Occasionally, after a few pints you'll be asked to buy some fries or wings or even a large chocolate chip cookie in order to satisfy the letter of the law. Take it in stride, or take off for a new pub (er, restaurant); just please, don't take offense—remember, it's our bureaucrats, not us.

Generally bars are open until 2am every day but Sunday, when they close at midnight.

RESTAURANTS MASQUERADING AS BARS

The Alibi Room Higher-end, trendy restaurant/bar brought to you at least in part by *X-Files*'s Gillian Anderson, the Alibi Room offers upstairs diners modern cuisine and a chance to flip through shelves full of old film scripts. Monthly script readings provide a venue for ever-hopeful wannabe screenwriters (last Sun of the month, call for details). Downstairs there's a DJ and dance floor. Located on the eastern edge of Gastown. 157 Alexander St. ✆ **604/623-3383.** www.alibiroom.com.

The Atlantic Trap and Gill Regulars in this sea shanty of a pub know the words to every song sung by the Irish and East Coast bands that appear onstage most every night. Guinness and Keith's are the brews of choice, and don't worry too much about ordering food. As the song goes: *"I'se the bye that orders the pint, I'se the bye*

that drinks her, keep your menus up in sight, and the government's none the wiser." Or something like that. 612 Davie St. ✆ **604/806-6393.**

Cellar Restaurant and Jazz Club Jazz has a loose definition on the West Coast. In this dark downstairs Kitsilano boîte, the live sounds stretch to include funk, fusion, jazz, and occasionally even hip hop. Local jazz aficionados swear by this place and almost begged us not to list their favorite hangout for fear of crowds. 3611 W. Broadway. ✆ **604/738-1959.** www.cellarjazz.com. Cover C$3-C$15 (US$1.95-US$9.75).

DV8 Even skate rats and snowboarders have to alight sometime, and this little Davie Street eatery is where the tribe comes to quaff pints and swap a brand of shoptalk incomprehensible to anyone born before Reagan took office. Bask in their youth. Enjoy the beer. DJs and live music weekly. Also check out the gallery space for monthly changing exhibits of innovative artwork. 515 Davie St. ✆ **604/682-4388.** www.dv8lounge.com.

The Jupiter Cafe *Finds* Located just off busy Davie Street in the West End, the Jupiter Cafe combines a post-apocalyptic industrial look with lounge chic. Black ceilings, exposed pipes, and roof struts mix surprisingly well with chandeliers, velvet curtains, and plush chairs. More important, the Jupiter is open late (till 4am some nights). True, it can be a challenge to flag down your waiter, but that gives you more time to scope out the crowd: gay and straight, funky and preppy, casual and dressed to kill. A huge outdoor patio provides a pleasant refuge from the street, but on colder nights it's the exclusive domain of die-hard smokers. The menu—burgers, pastas, and pizzas—is largely decorative. 1216 Bute St. ✆ **604/609-6665.**

Monsoon Restaurant What this slim little bistro in the otherwise sleepy section of Main and Broadway does really well is beer and fusion-induced tapas, accompanied by a buzzing atmosphere generated by interesting and sometimes beautiful people. Kitchen open until 11pm on weekdays, later on weekends. 2526 Main St. ✆ **604/879-4001.**

Naked *Finds* Naked is located up a marble staircase on the top floor of a former bank building downtown. The room is something out of Arabian Nights; rich warm light from candles and lanterns diffuses through billowing swaths of fabric hanging around low divans, couches, and foot-high tables. It's the perfect place to meet friends for cocktails—early or late—and share some food, served up in the kitchen of the downstairs Ballantynes Restaurant. DJs spin

acid and/or jazz and other down-tempo grooves, without drowning out all conversation. Open Fri and Sat from 9pm until around 3am. 432 Richards St. ✆ **604/609-2700.**

Urban Well The tanned and taut from nearby Kits Beach drop into the Well as the sun goes down, and often don't emerge until the next day. Monday and Tuesday there's comedy; not too long ago Robin Williams dropped by and told a few jokes. DJs keep things groovy the rest of the week. Regulars line up on the patio counter to people-watch, while inside there's a tiny dance floor for demonstrating once again that you can get down in beach sandals. 1516 Yew St. ✆ **604/737-7770.** www.urbanwell.com.

The Whip Gallery Restaurant The Whip's the one place in the city where the wall art and the clientele match. The folks sipping and munching look like they could—and probably did—produce the art hanging on the walls. Young and angry isn't the look here. Whip customers have some success under their belts and are mellowing into their 40s and 50s. Jazz combos sometimes set up in the corner. 209 E. Sixth Ave. ✆ **604/874-4687.**

ACTUAL BARS

The Arts Club Backstage Lounge The Arts Club Lounge has a fabulous location under the bridge by the water on the edge of False Creek. The crowd is a mix of tourists and art school students from neighboring Emily Carr College. Friday and Saturday, there's a live band in the evenings. Most other times, if the sun's out, the waterfront patio is packed. 1585 Johnston St., Granville Island. ✆ **604/687-1354.**

The Brickhouse Bar *Finds* Anthropologists and urban planners often speak of Gentrifiers—that tribe of mostly younger humanity who move into a down-at-heels neighborhood and by their presence and earning ability transform "gritty" into "funky," and then as the even-more-upscale yuppies arrive, into just plain freaking expensive. Main Street is still in the funky stage, and an evening at the Brickhouse is your chance to watch the tribe at play. The warm and bustling bar has pool tables, comfy couches, and wall-length tropical tanks. The tapas menu from the upstairs bistro is superb. 730 Main St. ✆ **604/689-8645.**

The Irish Heather A bright, pleasant Irish pub in the dark heart of Gastown, the Heather boasts numerous nooks and crannies, some of the best beer in town, and a menu that does a lot with the traditional Emerald Isle spud. The clientele is from all over the map, including artsy types from the local gallery scene, urban pioneers

from the new Gastown condos, and kids from Kitsilano looking for some safe but authentic grunge. 217 Carrall St. ✆ **604/688-9779.**

The Lennox Pub Part of the renewal of Granville Street, this new pub fills a big void in the neighborhood; it's a comfortable spot for a drink without having to deal with lines or ordering food. The beer list is extensive, containing such hard-to-find favorites as Belgian Kriek, Hoegaarden, and Leffe. There is a great selection of single-malt scotches, too. The pub has a turn-of-the-20th-century feel with lots of brass, wood paneling, and a long bar. The menu covers all the pub-food basics. 800 Granville St. ✆ **604/408-0881.**

SPORTS BARS

The Shark Club Bar and Grill The city's premier sports bar, the Shark Club—in the Sandman Inn—features lots of wood and brass, TVs everywhere, and on weekend evenings, lots of young and beautiful women who don't look terribly interested in sports. Despite this—or because of it—weekend patrons often score. 180 W. Georgia St. ✆ **604/687-4275.** C$4-C$6 (US$2.60-US$3.90) on Fri and Sat.

BARS WITH VIEWS

If you're in Vancouver, odds are you're here for the views. Everybody else is. The entire population could go make more money living in a dull flat place like Toronto, but we stay because we're addicted to the scenery. As long as that's your raison d'ètre, you may as well do it in style at one of the places below.

Cardero's Marine Pub On the water at the foot of Cardero Street, this Coal Harbour pub and restaurant offers an unmatched view of Stanley Park, the harbor, and the North Shore. Overhead heaters take away the chill when nights grow longer. 1583 Coal Harbour Quay. ✆ **604/669-7666.**

Cloud Nine View junkies will think they're in heaven. As this sleek hotel-top lounge rotates 6 degrees a minute, your vantage point circles from volcanic Mount Baker to the Fraser estuary to English Bay around Stanley Park to the towers of downtown, the harbor, and East Vancouver. And who knew paradise served such good martinis? 1400 Robson St. (42nd floor of the Empire Landmark Hotel). ✆ **604/662-8328.** Cover C$5 (US$3.25) Thurs-Sat.

The Dockside Brewing Company Located in the Granville Island Hotel, this watering hole offers an unmatched view of False Creek and great brews to boot. The food's also pretty good. Atmosphere is laid-back hip, but don't arrive too late; shortly after

the sun goes down the mostly 30-something patrons remember that now they have homes to go to. 1253 Johnson St. ✆ **604/685-7070.**

The Flying Beaver Bar *Finds* A West Coast tradition: Beaver and Cessna pilots pull up to the floating docks and step ashore to down a few in the floatplane pub. Located beneath the flyway of Vancouver International, the Beaver offers nonflyers great views of incoming jets, along with mountains, bush planes, river craft, and truly fine beer. 4760 Inglis Rd., Richmond. ✆ **604/273-0278.**

LOUNGES

Bacchus Lounge Step into Bacchus and bask in the low light cast by the fireplace and tealights, its Turneresque wall paintings, and the irony-free evocation of piano bars of yore. Lounge has (or had) staged a hip, self-aware second coming, but for Bacchus it's still and forever the days of Ike and Mamie's first White House term. The piano man in the corner pounds out Neil Diamond, and the crowd of boomers and their children hum along. In the Wedgewood Hotel, 845 Hornby St. ✆ **604/608-5319.** www.wedgewoodhotel.com.

Gerard Lounge Upscale taken to the edge of hyperbole, the Gerard faithfully re-creates the atmosphere of an English club, including not just the rustic oil paintings and dead animals on the walls, but also the lesser sons of the local (Hollywood) nobility having a bit of a rip with the native girls. The Gerard is also known for its exotic cocktails and Tuesday Chocoholic's Buffet. 845 Burrard St. ✆ **604/682-5511.** www.suttonplace.com.

Ginger Sixty-Two. The once trendy, then slummy, and now yuppifying Granville Street has recently seen some great new places open. Ginger Sixty Two is one of the most successful newcomers. A mix of lounge, restaurant, and club, it's the new darling of the fashion industry trendsetters who love to be spotted here. The room is funky warehouse-chic-meets-adult-rec-room, decorated in happening red, orange, and gold tones. Comfy crash pads are strategically placed throughout the room and plenty of pillows help prop up those less-than-young in the joints. 1219 Granville St. ✆ **604/688-5494.**

Gotham Cocktail Bar A clear case of the law of unintended consequences: The lounge adjoining this new steakhouse was designed for a male clientele—thick leather benches and a room-long mural of sensuous women in Jazz Age clothes. Men certainly did show up—well-off suits in their 30s and 40s particularly—but they were soon a tiny minority midst the great gaggles of women, all

seemingly sharing Ally McBeal's age, romantic aspirations, and hem length. 615 Seymour St. ✆ **604/605-8282.**

BREW PUBS

Sailor Hägar's Brew Pub Best brews on offer on the North Shore and only a short uphill stroll from the Seabus terminal. The room itself is nothing to write home about—just a popular local pub, with students, firemen, and off-duty search and rescue personnel munching nachos, savoring Sailor Hägar's brews, and playing billiards. 235 W. First St., North Vancouver. ✆ **604/984-3087.**

Steamworks Pub & Brewery Winding your way from room to room in this Gastown brewery is almost as much fun as drinking. Upstairs, by the doors, it's a London city pub where stockbrokers ogle every new female entrant. Farther in by the staircase, it's a refined old-world club, with wood paneling, leather chairs, and great glass windows overlooking the harbor. Down in the basement it's a Bavarian drinking hall—long lines of benches, set up parallel to the enormous copper kettles, support large groups of people intent on sucking back the brew in depth and at length. Fortunately, the beer's good. Choose from a dozen in-house beers. 375 Water St. ✆ **604/689-2739.** www.steamworks.com.

Yaletown Brewing Company Remember, if it's raining at 11:30am on a Thursday, all pints of brewed-on-the-premises beer are C$3.75 (US$2.40) for the rest of the day. The excellent beer is complemented by an extremely cozy room, a great summertime patio, and a good appetizer menu. Resist the urge to stay for supper, however. Snacks are the true forte. Sunday, all pizzas are half-price. 1111 Mainland St. ✆ **604/681-2739.**

4 Dance Clubs

Generally clubs are open until 2am every day but Sunday, when they close at midnight.

Au Bar An address is unnecessary for Au Bar; the long Seymour Street corral of those not-quite-beautiful-enough for expedited entry immediately gives it away. Inside, this newest of downtown bars is packed with beautiful people milling from bar to dance floor to bar (there are two) and back again. Observing them is like watching a nature documentary on the Discovery Channel. 674 Seymour St. ✆ **604/648-2227.** Cover C$5-C$8 (US$3.25-US$5.20).

Crush Wine snobs will feel right at home at the Crush Champagne Lounge; unique for a dance club, this venue has a

professional sommelier on staff to help you make your wine selection. The drink list also includes a large selection of sexy champagne cocktails and bubbly by the glass. The lounge has a small dance floor and the music is mellow R&B, soul, classic lounge, and jazz. Now it may just be the fancy drinks, but this crowd likes to dress up for the occasion; no fleece or Gore-Tex in sight. 1180 Granville St. ✆ **604/684-0355.** Cover C$5 (US$3.25).

Luv-a-fair Where the pale-skinned go to sweat: '80s early in the week, then Brit pop, alt-rock, house, and industrial mayhem as they head toward the weekend. Girls dance on the catwalk; approachable guys shake their stuff on the floorboards. The pool table and Foosball are behind the chain-link fence in the upstairs mezzanine. 1275 Seymour St. ✆ **604/685-3288.** Cover C$3-C$6 (US$1.95-US$3.90).

The Palladium Club Dancing is the order of the evening at this industrial space with a dance floor the size of Texas and a ceiling soaring up so high you can hardly make out the duct work. Monday, young 20-somethings dive into the '80s; Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday it's house; and Sunday night the Goths come out to play. For the boogie-less, there's pool. 1036 Richards St. ✆ **604/687-6794.** Cover varies, up to C$10 (US$6.50).

The Plaza Cabaret This former movie theater makes a great night club with its high ceilings and spacious dance floor. Lineups start early at this popular club. Wednesday night is Salsa Jam, with free salsa lessons available at 9pm for those who want some help with the moves; Thursday is Breakfast Club '80s night, the bad music that just won't go away. 881 Granville St. ✆ **604/646-0064.** Cover C$6-C$8 (US$3.90-US$5.20).

The Rage Tune in to radio station Z95 on the weekends after 8pm, and you'll hear exactly what's going on in this airplane hangar of a dance club: Five bars and speaker stacks loud enough to liquefy your brain make this the weekend house party to beat. Plaza of Nations, 750 Pacific Blvd. ✆ **604/685-5585.** Cover Fri C$6 (US$3.90), Sat C$7 (US$4.55).

Richards on Richards Dick's on Dicks has been packing 'em in longer than you'd care to know. What's the attraction? For years, the club was a notorious pickup spot. Things have mellowed a touch since then, but as the line of limos out front on busy nights attests, Dick's is still hot. Inside there are two floors, four bars, a laser light system, and lots of DJed dance tunes and concerts. Live music acts have included the likes of Junior Wells, James Brown, and, just

recently, 2 Live Crew and Jack Soul. 1036 Richards St. ✆ **604/687-6794.** www.richardsonrichards.com. Cover Fri-Sat C$8 (US$5.20) for the club; concerts C$10-C$30 (US$6.45-US$20).

Sonar Loud bass. Flashing lights. The endlessly thrumming rhythms of house. It's a combination that really works best with the aid of psychogenic substances with four-letter initials. Of course, the Sonar crowd of ravers-on-holiday already know that. 66 Water St. ✆ **604/683-6695.** www.sonar.bc.ca. Cover varies, C$5-C$10 (US$3.25-US$6.50) and up to C$20 (US$12.90) for special events.

Voda Nightclub Voda has quickly made a name for itself, attracting folks young, old, and in-between, with the only real common denominator being cash. Intriguing interior boasts a mix of waterfalls, rocks, and raw concrete—like a beautiful piece of 1950s Modernism. The small dance floor basks in the warm light from the hundreds of candles everywhere. Monday night is old fashioned R&B and funk, Tuesday's reserved for bands playing Latin or reggae, Thursday nights are martini elegant and a mix of DJs and bands fill out the rest of the week. In the Westin Grand Hotel, 783 Homer St. ✆ **604/684-3003.** Cover C$5 (US$3.25).

5 Gay & Lesbian Bars

The near complete lack of persecution in laid-back Vancouver has had a curious effect on the city's gay scene—it's so attitude-free it's often hard to tell apart from the straight dance world, male go-go dancers and naked men in showers notwithstanding. Many clubs feature theme nights and dance parties, drag shows are ever popular, and every year in early August, as Gay Pride nears, the scene goes into overdrive. The **Gay Lesbian Transgendered Bisexual Community Centre,** 2-1170 Bute St. (✆ **604/684-5307;** www.lgtbcentrevancouver.com), has information on the current hot spots, but it's probably easier just to pick up a free copy of *Xtra West!,* available in most downtown cafes.

The Dufferin Pub Buff at the Duff is a city institution; other drag shows might be raunchier, but none have quite the style. Shows are Monday through Thursday. Friday and Sunday the go-go boys strut their stuff (and yes, they do take it all off). The rest of the time—and before, during, and after many of the shows—the DJs keep you grooving. 900 Seymour St. ✆ **604/683-4251.** www.dufferinhotel.com.

The Fountain Head Pub Where do you go when you've run rings round the bathhouse and the disco ball no longer beckons?

Reflecting the graying and—gasp!—mellowing of Vancouver's boomer-age gay crowd, the hottest new hangout for homos is, well, a pub, the Fountain Head, located in the heart of the city's gay ghetto on Davie Street. Open a little over a year, the Fountain Head offers excellent microbrewed draught, good pub munchies, and a pleasant humming atmosphere till the morning's wee hours. Limited cruising has been known to happen, but more often customers come with friends and have things other than intimacy in mind. Indeed, most of the bragging at the Head involves the size of people's portfolios. 1025 Davie St. ✆ **604/687-2222.**

Global Beat Billed as a "restaurant lounge," this casual pub next door to the Odyssey has a relaxed atmosphere. There's no heavy cruising, but there are billiards tables, a great pub menu, inexpensive food and drinks, and the occasional surprised cruise ship passenger. 1249 Howe St. ✆ **604/689-2444.**

Heritage House Hotel This aging beauty of a downtown hotel plays host to three separate bars and lounges with a largely gay clientele. Downstairs, the Lotus Lounge is one of the hottest house music venues in town, particularly on Straight Up Fridays when the all female DJ team spins sexy funky house. On Saturdays clubbers gather for the deep underground house also referred to as Westcoast house. On the main floor, the Milk Lounge has a popular gay following, men flock to Friday's Cream night and on Saturdays it's Ladies Only. The third venue also on the main floor is Honey, a comfortable lounge where a mixed crowd gathers for cocktails or beers. On most nights the DJs keep the music on a mellow, conversational level. However, on Saturdays decibels go up significantly when the Queen Bee review, a New York-style cabaret drag show fills the house. 455 Abbott St. ✆ **604/685-7777.** Cover Milk and Lotus C$5-C$12 (US$3.25-US$7.80) some nights, Honey only on Sat C$7 (US$4.55).

Numbers Cabaret A multilevel dance club and bar, Numbers has been around for 20 years and hasn't changed a bit. Extroverts hog the dance floor while admirers look on from the bar above. On the second floor, carpets, wood paneling, pool tables, darts, and a lower volume of music give it a neighborhood pub feel. 1042 Davie St. ✆ **604/685-4077.** Cover Fri-Sat C$3 (US$1.95).

The Odyssey If this is what lay over the rainbow, I don't think anyone ever told Dorothy. Odyssey is the hottest and hippest gay/mixed dance bar in town (alley entrance is for men; women go in by the front door). The medium-size dance space is packed. Up

above, a mirrored catwalk is reserved for those who can keep the beat. Shows vary depending on the night. Monday it's Sissy Boy, Saturday it's Fallen Angel go-go dancers, and Sunday it's the Feather Boa drag show. And on Thursday, it's "Shower Power"—yes, that is a pair of naked men in the shower above the dance floor. No, you're not in Kansas anymore. 1251 Howe St. ✆ **604/689-5256.** www.theodysseynightclub.com. Cover C$3-C$5 (US$1.95-US$3.25). Wed no cover.

6 Other Diversions

CINEMA

Thanks to the number of resident moviemakers (both studio and independent), Vancouver is becoming quite a film town. First-run theaters show the same Hollywood fare seen everywhere in the world (on Tues at a discount rate), but for those with something more adventurous in mind, there are lots of options.

Attendance at the **Vancouver International Film Festival** (✆ **604/685-0260;** www.viff.org) reaches over 100,000, not including the stars and celebrities who regularly drop in. At this highly respected October event, over 250 new works are shown, representing filmmakers from 40 countries. Asian films are particularly well represented.

ART HOUSE & REPERTORY THEATERS

Since 1972, the **Pacific Cinematheque,** 1131 Howe St. (✆ **604/688-FILM (3456);** www.cinematheque.bc.ca), has featured classic and contemporary films from around the world. Screenings are organized into themes, such as "Jean Luc Godard's Early Efforts," film noir, or the "Hong Kong Action Flick: A Retrospective." Schedules are available in hipper cafes, record shops, and video stores around town. Admission is C$7 (US$4.55) for adults, C$5 (US$3.25) for seniors and students; double features cost C$1 (US65¢) extra. Annual membership, required to purchase tickets, is C$5 (US$3.25).

The alternative theater, the **Blinding Light!,** 36 Powell St. (✆ **604/878-3366;** www.blindinglight.com), is the Vancouver venue for all that is offbeat and experimental in film. Screenings to date have included new Vancouver shorts, bring-your-own-movie nights, experimental animation, and found-in-the-attic home movies and industrial films from the '50s and '60s. Admission is C$5 (US$3.25), with a C$3 (US$1.95) annual membership fee. There's also a yearly Vancouver Underground Film Festival.

SPECIALTY THEATERS

At the **CN IMAX,** Canada Place (✆ **604/682-IMAX**), a gargantuan screen features large-format flicks about large and none-too-bright denizens of the animal kingdom (sharks, wolves, elephants, X-treme athletes). A similar large screen at the **Alcan Omnimax,** Science World (✆ **604/443-7440**), features flicks about empty, wide-open spaces: Antarctica, Alaska, Arkansas, and the like.

Way off in the strip-mall lands of farthest Kingsway stands the **Raja,** 3215 Kingsway (✆ **604/436-1545**), a modest single-screen movie house dedicated to bringing in the best flicks from Bombay, the world's moviemaking capital. For those unfamiliar with the Indian masala genre, expect raw violence mixed with big production numbers—think *Mary Poppins* does *Die Hard.* Sometimes there are English subtitles, though strictly speaking they're not necessary. If Kingsway is too far off, there's another Raja on 639 Commercial Dr. (✆ **604/253-0402**).

CASINOS

Well, it's not Vegas, and there's no alcohol and no floor shows, but on the other hand, you haven't really lived till you've sat down for some serious gambling with a room full of Far Eastern big shots trying to re-create the huge night they had in Happy Valley or Macau. Betting limits are in force, so you can't lose too much, and half of the proceeds go to charity, so it's all for a good cause.

To try your hand at pai gow poker, blackjack, roulette, sic bo, or mini bac, check out the **Gateway Casino,** 611 Main St. (3rd floor), in the heart of Chinatown (✆ **604/688-9412**). Open from 10am to 4am daily, the maximum bet is C$500 (US$325). Another place to let it ride is the **Great Canadian Casino Downtown,** 1133 W. Hastings St. (✆ **604/682-8415**), open daily from noon to 2am. For blackjack, roulette, pai gow poker, and mini-baccarat you can also try the **Royal Diamond Casino,** 750 Pacific Blvd., in the Plaza of Nations (✆ **604/899-1061;** www.rdc.com). Here you can play high roller from noon to 4am daily.

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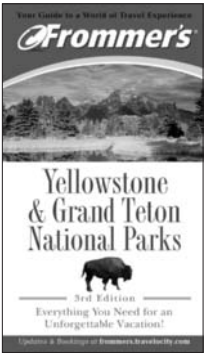

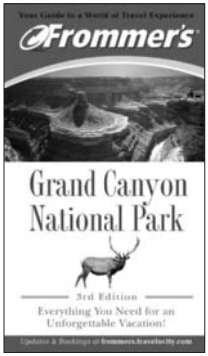

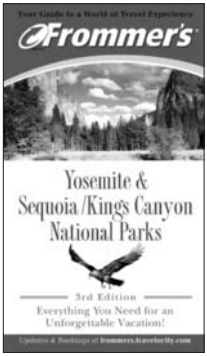
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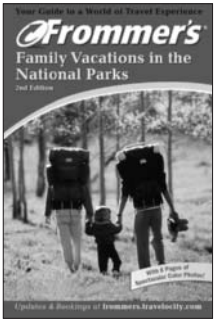

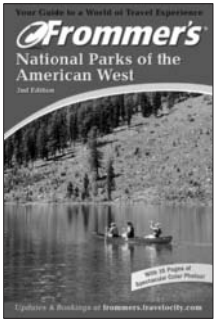

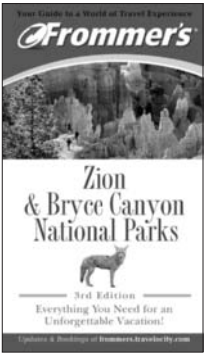

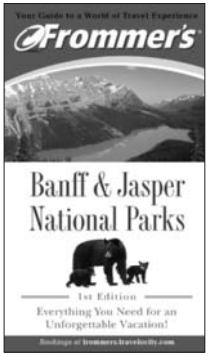

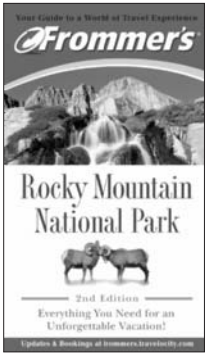

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- Southwest & South Central Plains
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Frommer's Road Atlas France
Frommer's Toronto with Kids
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Israel Past & Present
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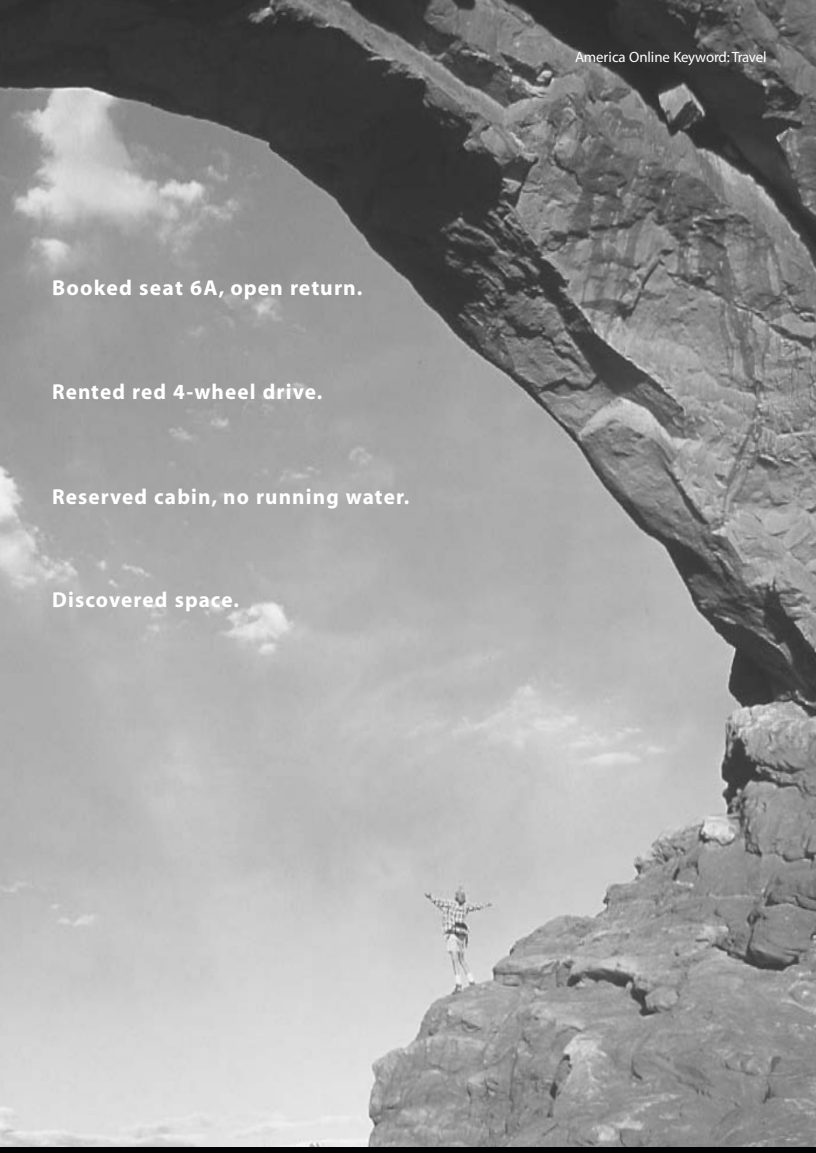
America Online Keyword: Travel
Booked seat 6A, open return.
Rented red 4-wheel drive.
Reserved cabin, no running water.
Discovered space.

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